

**Coordinated marketing communications mix:
Makton Media Channels case**

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International Business focusing on Marketing

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Title of report Coordinated marketing communication mix. Makton Media Channels Oy case.	Number of pages and appendices 78+10
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<p>Students of HAAGA-HELIA University of Applied Sciences executed research work for Makton Media Channels Oy. Current research is a thesis work of last year students of International Business studies Kirill Dolbnev and Eduards Dmitrijevs.</p> <p>Makton Media Channels is a novel company in Finnish market, thus MMC lack knowledge of communicating in local market. Thus particular work brings answer to a research problem that commissioning company were interested in: "How effectively coordinate marketing communication/promotion mix in order to create/establish sustainability in sales?" Additionally research give possible solution to sales strategy that can bring value to commissionaire.</p> <p>Reader of this work will be introduced to media market in Finland and demand of Russian tourist in Finland, what will bring understanding of necessity of certain research. Furthermore reader will get acquainted with theory of marketing communication in order to understand thoughts of investigators.</p> <p>Key results present answer to the research problem and explains in detail what is included in coordinated marketing communication mix and how sales process should be executed by Makton Media Channels in order to generate more profit.</p>	
Keywords Media, marketing, sales process, sales person, analysis, research, communication tools, coordinated, Russia, market, strategy	

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1 Introduction

This thesis is done by international students of HAAGA-HELIA University of Applied Sciences, who were studying business program focusing on marketing for more than two and a half years. The commissioner of the thesis is an advertising company, named as Makton Ltd, which is focused on creating and developing advertising solutions for companies, which are striving to acquire new customers.

Makton in brief is almost twenty years experienced company, which is oriented not only on creating and selling the advertising products as that was told before, but it also focused on distributing the ad products of other companies, production of corporate presents and souvenirs and on producing the stamps.

This thesis is done for subsidiary company of Makton Ltd, which is named as Makton Media Channels Oy (MMC). The company was established two years ago in Finland. The main business focus of MMC is to attract and direct the Russian visitors and tourists through the variety of media channels to use the Finnish services and buy the products from the Finnish companies. At the moment MMC has two main media product which are billboards and magazine.

Makton Media Channels has a focus of its business, however in the same time it has a lack of experience in selling the media products on a Finnish market. In other words, MMC does not have a clear understanding of how to make the Finnish companies to buy its media products and how to acquire new customers and their loyalty.

1.1 Research problem and research objectives

The primary research problem for the thesis is to establish sustainably growing sales for the commissioned company, which is Makton Media Channels Oy. By that reason it is in a great necessity to understand the purchasing behavior of Finnish companies due to media products. Therefore research problem can be stated as a question: “How effectively coordinate marketing communication/promotion mix in order to create/establish sustainability in sales?”

Furthermore, before solving the main research problem there is a need to explore communication methods on the particular market on which the commissioned company operates.

Beside the main research question there is a need to understand the purchasing behavior of Finnish companies when it comes to media products. In other words, there is necessity to answer on the question why Finnish companies would buy MMC's media products.

To conclude, additional aim of this thesis is to find out the necessary data, which would help to build up the sales strategy for Makton Media Channels on the Finnish market. Thus the sub-question for the research problem can sound as: "Which is the most appropriate sales strategy for MMC? Why?"

1.2 Aims and objectives

The aim of certain thesis research is to prove academic knowledge in marketing field acquired by investigators in HAAGA-HELIA University of Applied Sciences. From the perspective of the commissioner the purpose is to bring valid and reliable suggestions to the interested research objectives and provide answers to set research problems. Commissioning company will benefit from certain thesis by receiving recommendations for the marketing communication strategy on the Finnish market.

2 Marketing communication and media business

2.1 Business-to-business marketing environment

As that was told in the beginning, the commissioned company is operating in B2B sphere and possess media products and services. Thus, it is highly important to consider Business-to-Business environment and B2B media communication channel as vital aspects for building up successful communication strategy.

Business-to-Business marketing implies all the activities, which are taken for reaching, selling and simply marketing the products to the variety of organizations including commercial, governmental and so forth. The primary idea of a company operated in B2B is to find out the beneficial products, services or solutions for other businesses in order to make them to improve the performance of those companies. (De Pelsmacker, Geuens & Van de Bergh 2004, 509 - 524)

In general, the primary difference between B2B and B2C marketing is the level of individuality. Industrial companies are served in more individualized way than consumers, because those require as much value from the acquired product as it is possible. Furthermore, business marketers have to use face-to-face interaction with its clients, because the number of customers is rather much more limited than the amount of consumers in B2C markets. Moreover, the industrial marketers have to work with very picky and educated customers. Therefore, it is a challenge to influence the customers' minds through emotional advertising campaigns as it works well with consumers. Additionally the amount of decision makers in B2B markets is more than one. By that reason, industrial marketers are in need to satisfy the preferences of all individuals included in decision making process in order to establish the cooperation. (De Pelsmacker, Geuens & Van de Bergh 2004, 509- 524)

Industrial marketers should interact with its customers and use face-to-face communication methods in order get the orders. Furthermore, that is quite challenging to influence the customers through emotional methods rather than consumers. Therefore, the above-the-line communications (advertising) are unnecessary in B2B

marketing. Thus the primary communication method is personal selling. Even if the industries prefer to find out new partners on trade shows, the industrial companies need to have the sales force, which would represent the interests and work with customers. (De Pelsmacker, Geuens & Van de Bergh 2004, 509- 524; Kotler & Keller 2009, 529)

Media plays a vital role in bringing marketing communication message to the targeted audience. Correctly chosen media tool can bring maximum of encrypted message to the receivers. David Pickton and Amanda Broderick in `Integrated Marketing Communications` state that it is a fundamental to the success of marketing communications. (Pickton & Broderick 2005, 106)

There is variety of media tools (products) such as outdoors, magazines, newspapers, door-to-door, television, cinema, radio. Media products and services bring different values to the business. Choice of media products and services can depend on the aims and goals that business wants to achieve through particular media products. Criteria by which media goal can be evaluated are quantitative criteria, qualitative criteria, technical criteria. Quantitative criteria deal with aspects as how many people can be reached, how often, which people, geographic location of target audience. Qualitative criteria means that aim of the media is to build brand image of the company, make an emotional impact on target audience, add value to previous messages. Technical criteria means is expressed as a production cost it means that company is choosing the most cheap way to use media products or services. (De Pelsmacker, Geuens & Van de Bergh 2004, 210 – 226)

At the moment Makton Media Channels offers to the B2B market two media products: magazine called Terve and outdoors. There are various advantages of both products. Magazine's advantages as a media product are production cost, which are low, possibility to place high information content, frequency of the publications can be high, publication can have extended life, magazines are actively read. Benefits of outdoor as media products are diverse audience can be reached, possibility to attract high attention, fast brand identification, can be highly impactful on the audience, high

geographic selectivity, high visibility. (De Pelsmacker, Geuens & Van de Bergh 2004, 488)

In order to understand how to sell particular media products (magazine and outdoors) investigators should examine marketing communication process in B2B market and conclude which is the best marketing communication tool that could assist selling media products.

2.2 Media Market in Finland

As the commissioned company operates on the Finnish media market, it is significant to examine a big picture of the Finnish media market and evaluate the amount of shares, which belong to particular media type.

Based on statistics of Tilastokeskus in 2012 Finnish media market amounted 4.3 billion €. The Finnish media market has been rapidly changed compare to 2000 and decreased on 20 million euros. (Tilastokeskus 2012)

On the chart flow below there is the comparison of shares of specific media products on the Finnish media market for 2011 and 2012. As it might be seen on the most shares are belonged to printed media and its media share is 29,9%. The second place is taken by advertising on television and amounted 280,1 billion € in 2012. Outdoor and traffic advertising are taking the last position on the Finnish media market and get minimum of shares amounted 3,2%. (Aikakausmedia 2013)

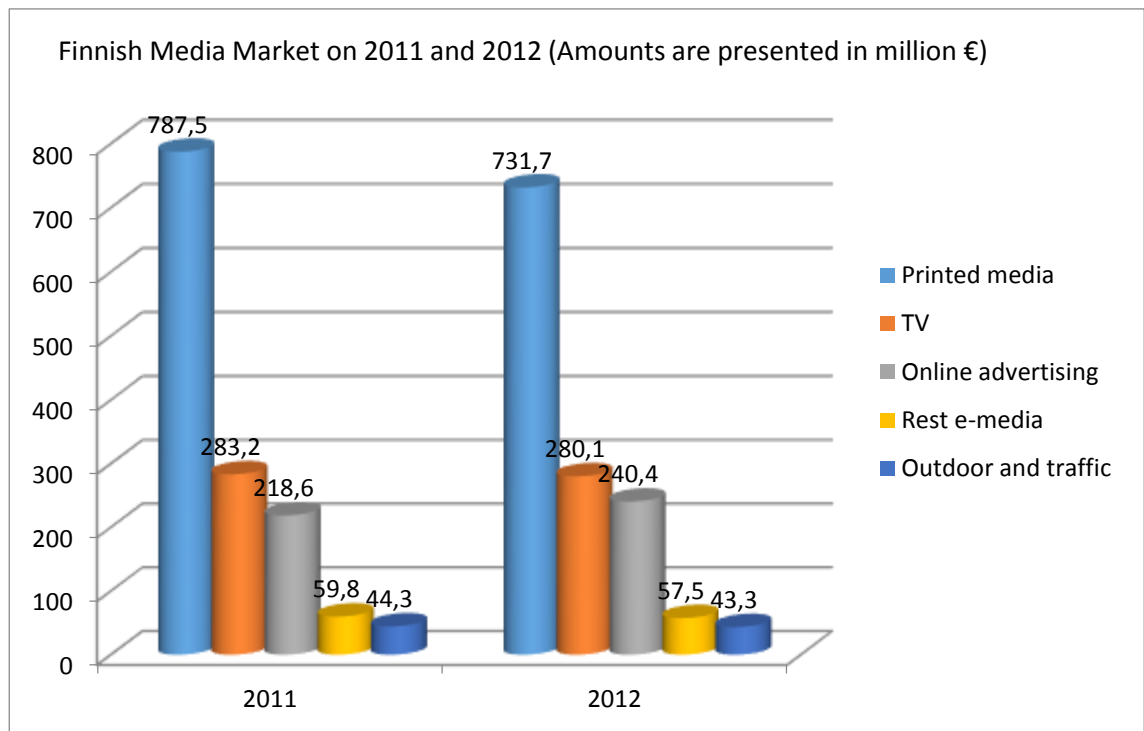


Figure A. Media Market in Finland in 2011 and 2012.

Compare to 2011, all the media products decreased its shares in 2012 except online media advertising. Online media advertising increased its turnover on 10%, which is quite huge difference in one year decade. As a result it might be seen that even though the most shares belongs to the printed media, media companies should think in advance and develop online media channels in order to succeed on the Finnish market as online media grows rapidly.

There is no actual statistics on how much money Finnish companies spend on media channels to attract Russian customers. Thus, Investigators decided to use the search engine with an eye to identify competitors of Makton Media Channels OY. The main criterion of the competitor is that the company provides Finnish companies with media products and services, which help to generate Russian tourists into the existing customers. The list of primary competitors is presented in attachment 6. (Based on attachment 6)

Media products provided by Media Companies focused on attraction of Russian tourists to Finnish companies

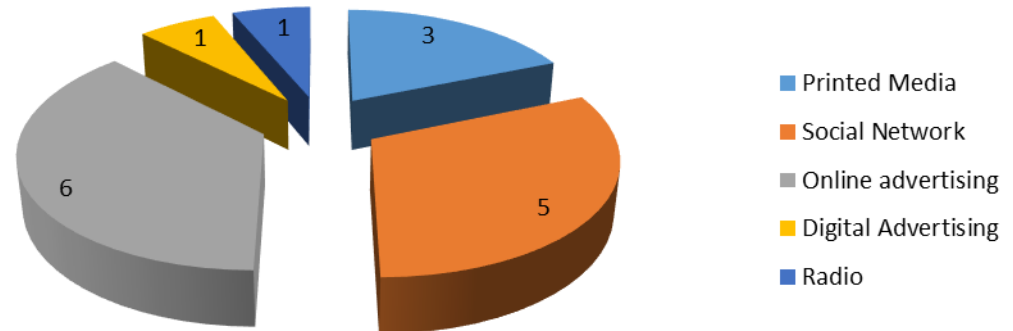


Figure B. Media products focused on Russian customer attraction. Based on attachment 6

On the following pie chart it might be seen that online advertising and social network media are almost on the same level and takes the first position among others. It might be explained by fact that Finnish companies started to invest more in web media in general in times more than before. Furthermore, only three found companies through search engines provides with printed media such as magazines' or newspapers' advertisement. In Finland there is the only radio, which is focused on Russian tourists. Digital ad is provided by one Finnish company, which strives to sell the ad to Finnish companies on Digital screens located in Saint-Petersburg. (Based on attachment 6)

To conclude, Finnish media market is huge, however it is a challenge to predict the turnover allocated on Russian customer attraction. However, it should be added that most of media companies initiated to provide with online media.

2.3 Demand of Russian tourists in Finland

There is a need to identify demand of Russian tourists as the commissioned company is focused on attraction of Russian tourists to use Finnish products/services through variety of media channels.

Based on Finnish statistics in total Finland received 7.6 million visitors. The chart flow below represents the amounts of people from different countries, which travelled to Finland in 2011 and 2012. On the following chart flow it might be seen that Russian tourists more in Finland in 80% more than the second travelling country, which Estonia. (Statistics Finland 2013)

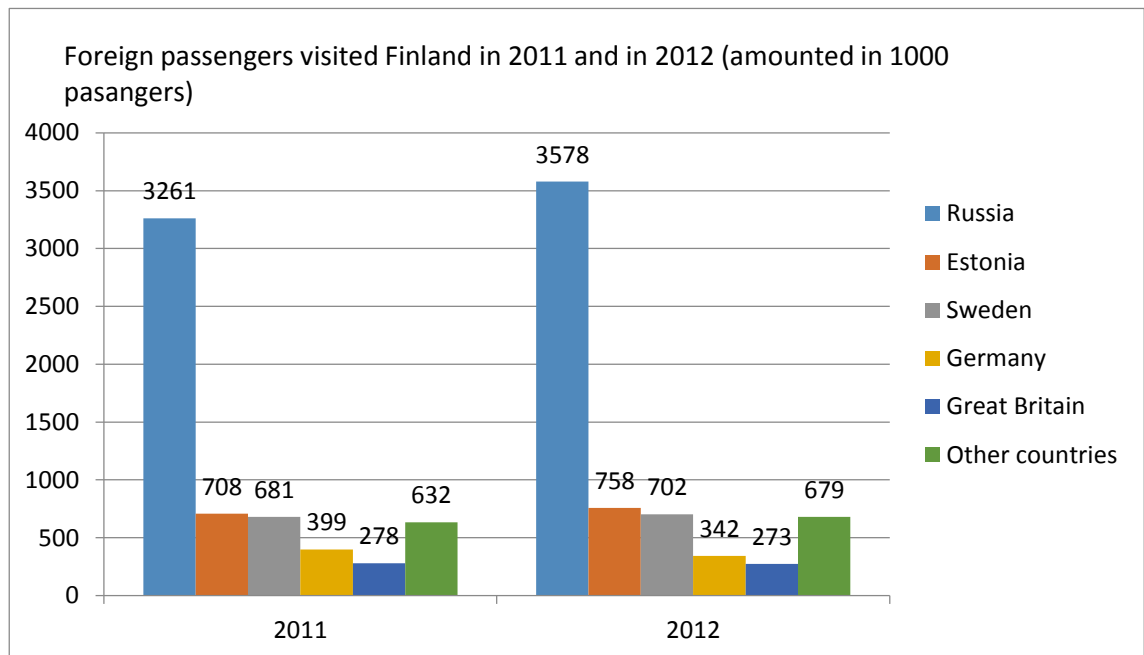


Figure B. Foreign passengers visited Finland in 2011 and in 2012. Source: Statistics Finland 2013

Furthermore, it should be mentioned that in one year decade the percentage of Russian travelers increased on 10%, which is relatively vast. There is a probability that the amount of Russian tourists will increase in the next year as well. (Statistics Finland 2013)

The second chart flow describes the expenditure by foreign passengers in Finland in 2012, by country of residence. It might be clearly seen that the biggest piece cake is taken by Russian visitors, who spent 888 million euros per one year in 2012. In other words, more than a half of money were brought by Russian visitors, thus the development of specific service is an essential. (Statistics Finland 2013)

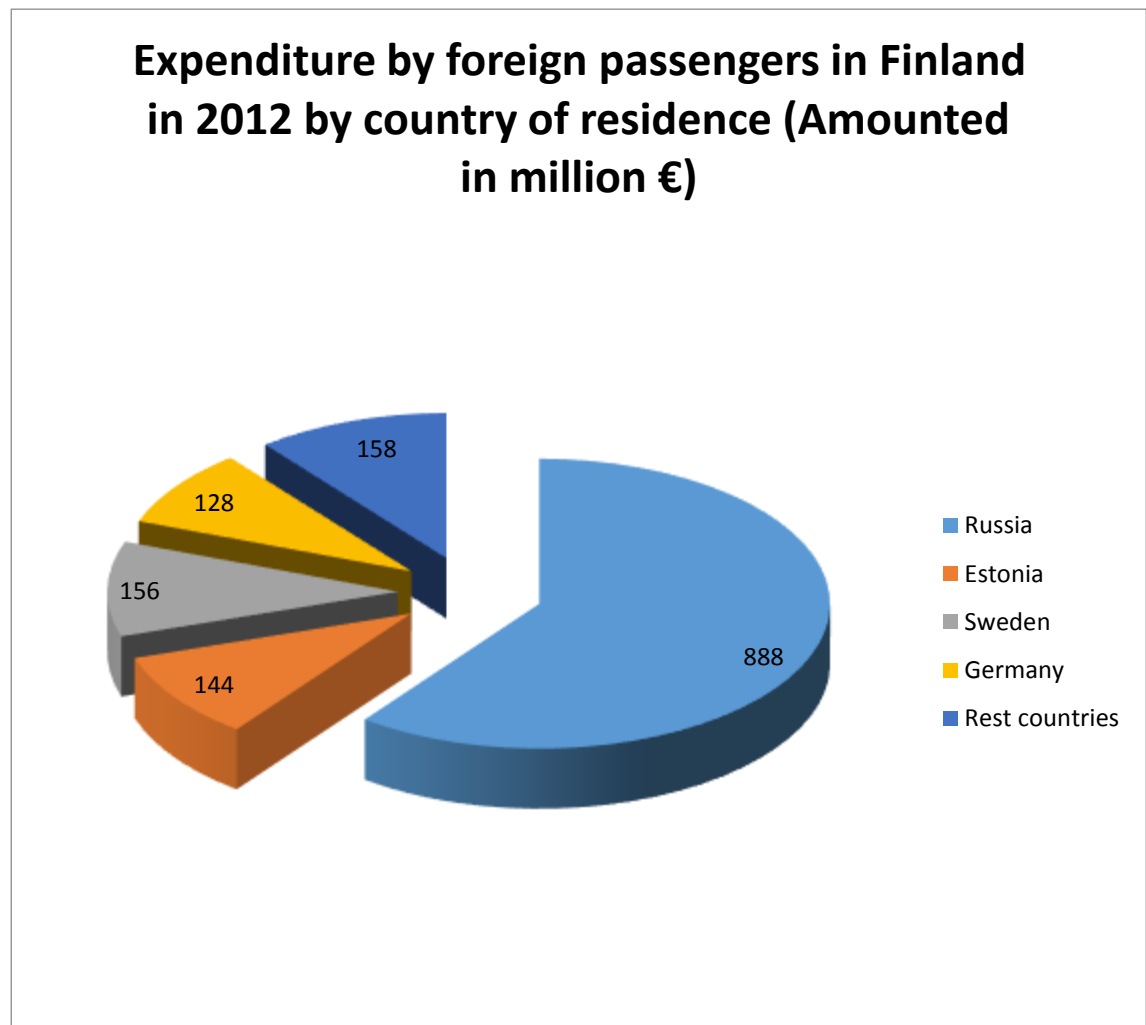


Figure C. Expenditure by foreign passengers in Finland in 2012. Source: Statistics Finland 2013

Based on those two flow charts it may be concluded that Russian visitors play essential role in Finnish economy. Hence, lots of Finnish businesses put efforts to attract Russian tourist. It leads to the increased demand towards media products and services focused on Russian target group from the side of Finnish companies.

To conclude, Makton Media Channels focused on the right media sector and it should continue to develop.

2.4 Marketing communication

Marketing communication is a part of a marketing mix which consists from four instruments: product, price, place, promotion. Promotion or marketing communications are tools by which organization interacts with its targeted audience. (De Pelsmacker, Geuens & Van den Bergh, 2010)

Marketing communication covers a variety of promotional activities that is directed towards one or more specified audience. However marketing communication also tries to involve in marketing communication all the elements of promotional mix what creates synergy and derives more effective marketing communication. Marketing communication is aimed to promote the brand concept using all the communication tools that interact with each other and work as a common mechanism. Moreover marketing communication is a process that seeks to create loyal and trustworthy relations with customer and stakeholders, and also to generate brand equity. Generally saying marketing communication is a management process of integrating all marketing communication aspect and implementing them to the appropriate audience in order to gain better brand coherence. (Pickton & Broderick, 2005)

Marketing communication also can be defined as direct or indirect process by which firms try to inform, persuade and remind to customers or consumers about the products or services. Marketing communication creates a healthy, valuable, synergetic dialogue with customers in order to deliver right message. Marketing communication bring comprehensive knowledge to the customer or consumer about product or services in order to clarify why there is a need for certain goods or services. (Kotler & Keller 2006, 508-510)

Moreover communication may vary amongst the cultures therefore there might appear factors influencing effective communication process. Especially cultural perceptions need to be considered when company goes internationally. In non-domestic business

environment marketing communication varies according to different aspects, for instance, economic, technological, political, social and legal. These conditions have to be analyzed in order to create correct marketing communication strategy.

Miscommunication in foreign marketplace can cause wrong message interpretation, thus all the marketing communication tools have to be used in accordance of the preferences of the domestic culture and legal concepts. (De Pelsmacker, Geuens & Van den Bergh 2010, 301-303)

2.5 Marketing communication strategy

Conventional understanding of marketing communication strategy emphasizes importance of a mixture of activities in the communication mix. Meaning that performance level of direct marketing, personal selling, advertising, sales promotion and public relations, which usually include and consist of a well-planned sequence of communication activities, is important. Marketing communication strategy means which direction communication will go, through which channels and how it will reach targeted audience. (Fill 2005, 259)

Nevertheless this approach is in contradiction with the primary flow. Customers expect company to be market-oriented and audience-centered, neither production orientated. Therefore organization has to analyse B2B customer profile, understand behaviour, characteristics. (Fill 2005, 260)

Donald Hambrick states that there are a lot of differences in understanding marketing strategy concept, as it varies according to certain situation, industry and environment in which strategy should be performed. Marketing outlines 3 most important marketing communication strategies: pull strategy, push strategy and profile. (Fill 2005, 263)

Chiefly ***pull strategy*** is aimed on end-users B2B customers, with the purpose to raise awareness, inform and educate, change or reinforce attitudes, minimize the risk, encourage and motivate a target audience. These activities ensure end-customers that product or services will be available for them at the purchasing moment. In B2B market structure this means that companies try to contact end-customers in order to

avoid distribution channels and deal directly with the end-user. Thus the communication goal in pull strategy is to acquire purchase. Pull strategy conventionally is aimed to deliver messages targeted at certain audiences and to the general task that a campaign may seek to reach. (Fill 2005, 279)

Additionally pull strategy aims to evolve brand awareness which usually needed to be supplemented with suitable public relations work in order to create third-party reliability. (Fill 2005, 280)

In ***push strategy*** organizations communication goal is to develop trustworthy relation-ships with intermediaries - wholesalers, distributors or retailers in order to motivate them to purchase products and services and direct those to the end-user. Furthermore a push strategy encompasses communications that has an impact on other trade channel organizations in a way that communications motivates them to buy in bulk, allocate resources and be knowledgeable about characteristics and benefits of each product. Therefore it will lead to more effective resale and will account for the achievement of their (trade channel) own objectives. (Fill 2005, 277)

Profile strategy takes in account such audience as stakeholders who need to know about and understand about organization rather than make purchase. Stakeholders can impact organization in variety of ways. For instance one of such interested stakeholders could be local community who would need to know about employment possibilities within the company. (Fill 2005, 278)

2.6 Marketing communication tools

As that was written in research problem, the main idea of the whole thesis is to build up the sales strategy or even otherwise, how the commissioned company should communicate with its existing and potential customers. Therefore, the first chapter is about marketing communication channels.

Marketing communication channels are the tools through which the company tries to inform its potentials or existing customers about its products or services, which the company endeavors to promote and finally to sell. (Kotler & Keller 2009, 510-511)

Marketing communication tools also might be used by consumers with an eye to educate themselves about the products supplied by the particular company and to understand the use and the benefit, which they might acquire after getting this product. The communication methods assist organizations to deliver the particular message to its targeted audience. (Kotler & Keller 2009, 510-511; Answers 2013)

Marketing communication tools are known as marketing communication mix. This is a mixture of few primary communication tools such as advertising, sales promotion, events and experiences, public relations and publicity, direct marketing, interactive marketing, personal selling. Those communications mix might be used by an organization with an eye to bring the particular message to targeted audience. (Kotler & Keller 2009, 526-529)

Advertising is one of tools in communications mix and pertain to the integrated communications. Advertising itself is a paid and used communication tool by companies with an eye to reach a mass by the particular message. Mostly, advertising attempts to reach audiences with the help of mass media. (Wells, Moriarty & Burnett 2006, 5)

The primary idea of advertising is to influence the crowds to perform some action or simply to inform the audience about the product released by a particular company. (Wells, Moriarty & Burnett 2006, 8)

Advertising is a greater tool in B2C environment. In B2B market advertising is not flexible and effective for specific customer. In B2B market it is difficult to create one unique advertising campaign that will cover all the organizations. In B2B environment capacity is not vital, thus it is not considered as a primary tool of communications mix. However advertising still can be useful in B2B market in a way to inform and remind

about product and services. Moreover B2B customers seek to acquire information, whereas advertising bring emotional and entertainment feelings which are important in B2C. (Fill 2005, 303-304)

Sales promotion is the second tool in the list of communications mix. It intends any impulse from the side of manufacture, which urges wholesalers, retailers or simply consumers to commit the purchase and to inspire company's sales force to sell the product. This communication tools is used not only by profitable but also non-profit organizations. The reason is because with the help of this tool organizations might influence the behavior of its customers. (Shimp 2007, 490-491)

The primary idea of sales promotion is that it appears as an assist in encouraging wholesalers or end users consumers to buy goods or services from a particular company sooner than from others, or to motivate those to perform the buying action more frequently. In other words, this tools helps the companies to create the customer' behavior beneficial for it. (Shimp 2007, 490-491)

Sales promotion is an important tool of B2B marketing communication. It is at best, short term device which is design to encourage increase in sales. Sales promotion has faced dramatic growth and change over the years. The reasons behind the growth of sales promotion are for instance that sales promotion is useful in securing trial for new products; they add excitement at the point of sale and they can install a sense of urgency among customers. Sales promotion can be divided in three different levels. They communicate, they provide incentive and they advance the purchasing decision. Sales promotions have also three different impacts to customers: economic, informational and emotional. (De Pelsmacker, Geuens & Van den Bergh 2010, 408)

There are several major trade promotional tools that are used for different reasons in B2B environment. Price-off (off-invoice or off-list) is a discount that the seller provides for the buyer, company, organization. This discount is valid for a certain purchase amount during a stated time period. Allowance is an amount offered in return for the help to promote manufacturer's product or services in certain way from

the side of retailer. Free goods are offers of additional amount of products or services to intermediaries who purchased a certain amount. (Fill 2005, 256)

Exhibitions and trade fairs is one of the oldest communication method used by producers and retailers of a particular product with an eye to discuss with each other the present and future trade possibilities. Furthermore this way of communication is convenient for product or service presentation or simply selling. (De Pelsmacker, Geuens & Van de Bergh 2004, 420)

There are a variety of reasons why the companies might use exhibitions and trade fairs. The first is *selling products*. This aspect is most important for the companies, which strives to sell its products through trade and fairs. The second reason is generating the sales leads, which is simply transferring the potentials into existing customers. Thirdly, companies use exhibitions and fairs for launching and/or tasting new product. Companies just released new product might test it on trade fair and see the interest and impression of visitors with an eye to decide should this product be supplied in a mass or not. The fourth beneficial point, which might be acquired through exhibitions, is *increasing brand and company awareness* among the targeted group. Moreover, one of the audiences of trade and fairs are journalists, who might publicize an article about over past fair and mention the name of represented companies in there. Another aspect might be compulsory for some companies and that is called *keeping up the corporate image*. In case if the particular company was not present on a particular fair, participant might acquire the negative impression what in its order influencing the brand equity. Moreover, companies might perform the *competition analyze* by attending the trade fair of its industry. Indeed, the companies might demonstrate its present success and future trends. Thus there is a great possibility to learn about the competitors strategies through the primary source. The final reason, why companies attend the fairs is for *acquiring new employees*. For example there are a lot of sales representatives who walk around the fair and show their skills in action. Employers might observe and increase the efficiency of its work force by getting the new sales person from exhibition. (De Pelsmacker, Geuens & Van de Bergh 2004, 422-427)

Public Relations (PR) is not definitely identified yet and there are lots of discussions around this topic. For example, in 1976, one public relations pioneer Rex Harlow found out 472 definitions of PR and after that suggested his own one. The key message in his definition was that PR is a management function, which helps an organization to establish and maintain the communication process between the organization and its publics. It includes such processes as management of problems of issues, working on forming and dealing with public opinion and so on. (Theaker 2008, 4; Oklahoma Historical Society 2007)

Alison Theaker suggested his PR definition in his Public Relations Handbook, which is quite simple, meaningful and in the same time identify the substance of the PR: 'Public relations is about reputation – the result of what you do, what you say and what others say about you.' (Theaker 2008, 5)

At some point public relations differentiates from the rest of marketing communications. While rest communications are focused on performing short-term campaigns for getting the maximum benefit, public relations campaigns are made of well planned activities oriented on a long-term return. (De Pelsmacker, Geuens & Van de Bergh 2004, 274-276)

It might be pointed out that public relations are not the best tool for communicating with secondary target groups: "Why you should endanger short-term benefits on behalf of long-term returns?" On the other hand well-planned PR performance might award the company with a good reputation, which in its order appears as one of the purchase aspects why people would buy the product from a particular company. Furthermore, public relations might ease the process of closing the deal of company's sales force. Indeed primary company's stakeholders such as opinion leaders, financial analysts and investors might ignore the advertising campaigns or cold calls from the side of sales department. However, in the same time they would pay an interest towards to the company through reading the newspapers and other media. The reason of it is because publicity is not under the control of the company and it includes the third party such journalist whose primary goal is not to promote an organization from

the bright side. Thus publicity crates creditability. (De Pelsmacker, Geuens & Van de Bergh 2004, 274-276; Theaker 2008, 205-207)

Public relations might be perfect supplemental communication tool for building up sterling coordinated marketing mix. Moreover it is a complementary tool that aims to generate the reputation in the minds of shareholders, but in the same time it requires few efforts towards working with the third party such as journalist.

Direct Marketing (DM) is a marketing tool, which implies contacting the customer or the prospect directly with the purpose to obtain an immediate reply or acts on a particular message generated by a company. The most used means of DM are telephone, mailing, catalogues, brochures and those do not include the third sales party such as dealers or retailers. Direct marketing intends to individualize each customer or prospect. Thus, one of important aspects of this communication tool is database, which helps to keep up with information about each prospect. (De Pelsmacker, Geuens & Van de Bergh 2004, 364-377)

There are few primary purposes why companies use direct marketing. The first one is **direct sales**. It intends selling the products without face-to-face interaction. The best example is when companies mails the catalogues to its customers and potentials and then receives the back phone calls and mails in order to proceed the order. The second purpose, which might be acquired through the use of DM is **sales and distribution support**. Indeed direct marketing tool might be used for developing and keeping up sales, by decreasing unnecessary costs. For example, the sales representative does not surely need to meet with the prospect for each contact. He or she could simply call and save the time for contacting the rest of customers and potentials. Finally, companies use direct marketing for obtaining **customer retention and loyalty**. As that was mentioned before, the heart of DM is database, which strives to get as much information about each prospect as it is possible for individualizing. In truth, more and more companies started to struggle for customer loyalty, because it in times cheaper to keep the customer than to acquire the new ones. (De Pelsmacker, Geuens & Van de Bergh 2004, 364-377)

Direct marketing can be defined as a process that complicates personal selling. After interpersonal communication took place a direct marketing - an email communication, telephone conversation or direct mail letters communication - continuous. Direct marketing is aimed to deliver personalized messages in one-to-one relationships. There are two main types of direct marketing: direct mail and telemarketing. (Fill 2005, 297)

E-commerce or e-communications seek to fulfil variety of marketing objective via computer network infrastructure by exchange of digital data. E-communication happens in internet, which is an exclusive, autonomous which is not owned by a commercial or governmental body. E-commerce seeks objectives as to generate brand awareness, shape brand image and brand perceptions, create loyalty and generate trials. There are varieties of tools that are used in e-commerce to reach these aims. E-marketing include such tools as brand websites, online advertising, online events and seminars, online games, viral marketing, online contests and sweepstakes, e-sampling and e-coupons, e-mail marketing. (De Pelsmacker, Geuens & Van den Bergh 2010, 554-577)

Personal selling is one of an effective marketing communications tools, which implies face-to-face interaction with the customers and potentials and used for informing, providing the solutions and establishing long-term relations or convince the certain members of a definite target group. (De Pelsmacker, Geuens & Van de Bergh 2004, 442-445)

Before today the personal selling method was used by companies for aggressively selling the goods to its customers. Thus, this marketing communication had obtained not the best reputation among others, because there was the belief that this tool is used for selling unnecessary products to customers. However, this tool was reconsidered and started to be oriented on finding the convenient solutions for prospects with an eye to establish long-term relations. (De Pelsmacker, Geuens & Van de Bergh 2004, 442-445)

In comparison with the rest communications, personal selling always intends the dialogue between the consumer and company's representative. Even as such marketing communications as direct marketing, which includes phone calls, does not imply the face-to-face communication , it is also included in personal selling process. (De Pelsmacker, Geuens & Van de Bergh 2004, 442-445)

Business-to business selling (B2B) is the process of cooperation with the businesses and selling the semi-finished or finished products and services to those. The sales people need to be educated concerning the product they sell and they should know what kind a benefits it would bring to a particular company. (De Pelsmacker, Geuens & Van de Bergh 2004, 442-445)

Word-of-Mouth is not an exclusion from the list of marketing communication tools. Nowadays most people say that this is even the most effective communication tool then the rest. Basically, Word-of-Mouth means oral or written recommendation of the customer, who was satisfied with acquired product, to his interlocutor, who might appear as a business partner, neighbor, family member and so forth. (Power Home Biz 2013; Business Dictionary 2013)

Nowadays buyers, especially in B2B sector, are very educated towards the promotional information about the product. People started to believe less to the sales rep's speech or to the millions ad messages which comes each day. Thus, it might be stated that the most reliable information comes from the person whom you are familiar with, because he/she appears as independent party and does not have any benefit from company's development. That is why word-of-mouth counts as the most influential on the purchasing decision making process. (Power Home Biz 2013)

2.7 Purchasing behavior of media products

In order to understand the purchasing behavior of existing and potential customers due to media products there is a need to explore such a term as advertising and media selection. This is a process of selecting the media through which an advertising or

message should be delivered to targeted audiences, which might bring the maximum effect/benefit to the company. (Ghana has a voice 2013)

There are various criteria which influence purchasing behavior of media products, however there are main which are usually taken in account.

Before Media Company have started to sell its media products and service it should take in account the list of criteria by which customers choose media and those are: financial consideration; circulation; frequency; product nature; market nature; audience type. (Blogspot 2013)

An initial criteria by which the media should be chosen is financial consideration. In other words, it is an essential to understand the level of financial resources, which might be allocated on media channel. (Blogspot 2013)

Second important factor is circulation of media channel. Bigger the circulation of particular media channel, more audiences will be achieved and the other way round. (Blogspot 2013)

Frequency is another important criterion, which might influence the media buyers' choice. It simply means the duration for which the desired advertised message will be repeated. (Blogspot 2013)

Another criteria, which is mostly taken into the consideration is the nature of the product. The products should classify into two groups: those which are sold to consumers; sold to businesses. Business-to-consumer goods should be advertised in mass media (radio, magazines, TV and others), while business-to-business products/services should be advertised through specific media (niche media products), which are focused on specific audiences. (Ghana has a voice, 2013)

Nature of the market criteria is responsible for analyzing the characteristics of location, where the media is spread. It includes the nature of audiences and their purchasing

power and other factors. In other theories authors said that audience type is important, however it is basically the same criteria as was described before. Media buyers examine the media spread location carefully in order to understand the convenience of covered audiences. (Ghana has a voice 2013; Blogspot 2013)

2.8 Media sales strategy

As that was defined in the previous chapter concerning B2B marketing environment and B2B communication tools, it is possible to conclude that personal selling is the primary tool for the companies, which operates in industrial markets. However there are other B2B marketing communication tools that contribute to overall success of personal selling.

Makton Media Channels possess two media products: magazine “Terve” and billboards. Therefore researchers have taken in account general theory of sales strategy and modified it according to media products. Thus further theoretical part will represent media sales strategy.

Furthermore, as that was discussed in research problem, the commissioned company has few media products; however it has a lack of experience in selling. Consequently, on the assumption of those reasons, the sales management should be considered in details.

Sales management is the collection of efforts, which are taken for evolving and implementation sales performance and it also includes such processes as sales monitoring, evaluating sales performance and so forth. (Business dictionary 2013)

The primary role of selling is to establish value for a company due to creating the contact with prospects. The value in its order generally implies as revenue or profits, which might be acquired from a short or a long-term transactions. (Donaldson 2007, 3)

The sales strategy implies the creation of a sales plan for the sales team, which would appear as an assist in entering the marketplace and originate the value for the company as revenue. In other words, the selling strategy is the actual plan, which helps to organize the sales force in terms engaging the prospects into the sales prospects. (Slideshare 2013; VP of Strategy, LLC 2013)

The figure 1.1 sales strategy chart flow model represents the primary key steps, which should be considered during organization of sales strategy process. The sales segmentation step includes the process of identifying the market segment and identification of key accounts. The second step intends the alternative in terms of sales channels in terms of choosing the sales distribution channels through which goods or services would be sold. It is important to take in account media purchasing behavior in order to apply sales theoretical framework to media. The sales process is about principal steps, which should be viewed by sales team from initial contact to closing the deal. The pricing strategy is the strategy through which the product's prices should be defined by the criteria presented in the next chapters. After designating the previous steps, the sales funnel calculation should be proceed. This is the mathematical process appeared as an assist in identifying the profitability of the designed sales strategy. Nowadays, most of the companies include after sales services in its sales strategy with an eye to retain the customers and decrease potential acquisition costs. (Slideshare 2013; VP of Strategy, LLC 2013)

To conclude, the just described steps will explained in detail in further subchapters in order to proceed the clear sales strategy for the commissioned company.

Sales Strategy Model



Figure 1.1. Sales strategy chart flow model (VP of Strategy, LLC 2013)

Business market segmentation is defined as a process of allocating market into subcategories of business customers or organizations who has one and the same characteristics and afterwards choosing one or more subcategories which company plan to reach using a unique strategy. (Doole, Lancaster & Lowe 2005, 139)

Business markets can be segmented in accordance with different variables.

Nevertheless there are no certain and stated common business segments variables as business needs may significantly vary in accordance to business environment. However the most used variables for business market segmentation are geographic, organizational characteristics, purchase behavior, organizational policy, which are reflected in Figure 1.2. (Doole, Lancaster & Lowe 2005, 155)

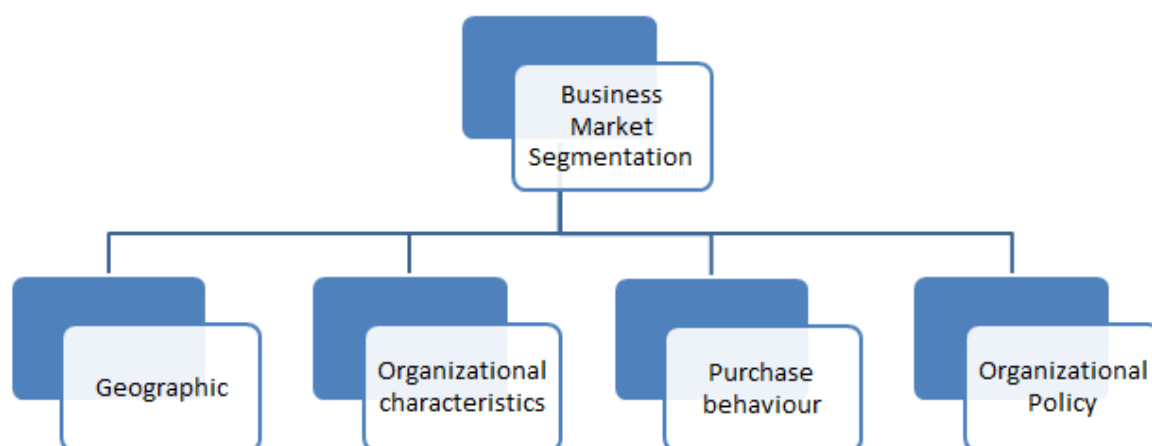


Figure 1.2 Selected methods for segmenting business markets (Doole, Lancaster, Lowe 2005, 155)

Geographical segmentation of business markets means that companies are allocated in accordance with their geographic location. Moreover in this variable is determined whether organization is domestic or international. (Doole, Lancaster & Lowe 2005, 156; Fill & Fill 2005, 54)

Organizational characteristics are more important aspect that needs to be considered. In includes such variable as industry type, which seeks to identify company by type of business. Additionally organizational characteristics determine organizational size

which represents the number of employees within the firm. Usage rate also is a part of organizational characteristics it outlines businesses by the usage rate of certain services and product. (Doole, Lancaster & Lowe 2005, 156; Fill & Fill 2005, 55)

Purchase behavior tool in business market segmentation identifies and unite customers who share the same buying values and factors, and consider them important. Purchase behavior define five factors that usually are the most significant in business buying situation which are product performance, product quality, service, delivery and price. These factors allow allocating business customers by purchasing behavior. (Boundless 2013)

Every company has her own policies that manage purchasing decision. For instance, majority of industries require certain quality standards. Moreover organizations may ask for particular quality standard of the company. Thus policy may show that reputation of suppliers is critical and crucial, and that the deal can be closed only if all the policy requirements are met. (Fill & Fill 2005, 56)

The principal aim in ***sales channels*** for a producer is to find out through which networks to deliver product to the market and make its products to be consumed. Thus it is highly important for manufacture to identify the right price, place and time for delivering its production to targeted audiences. The possible ways through which the produced products could be procured are sales channels. (Chron 2013)

In the figure 1.3 the structure of the sales channels is explained. Figure emphasizes that sales channels are split up on two types such as direct and indirect sales channels. (Donaldson 2007, 158)

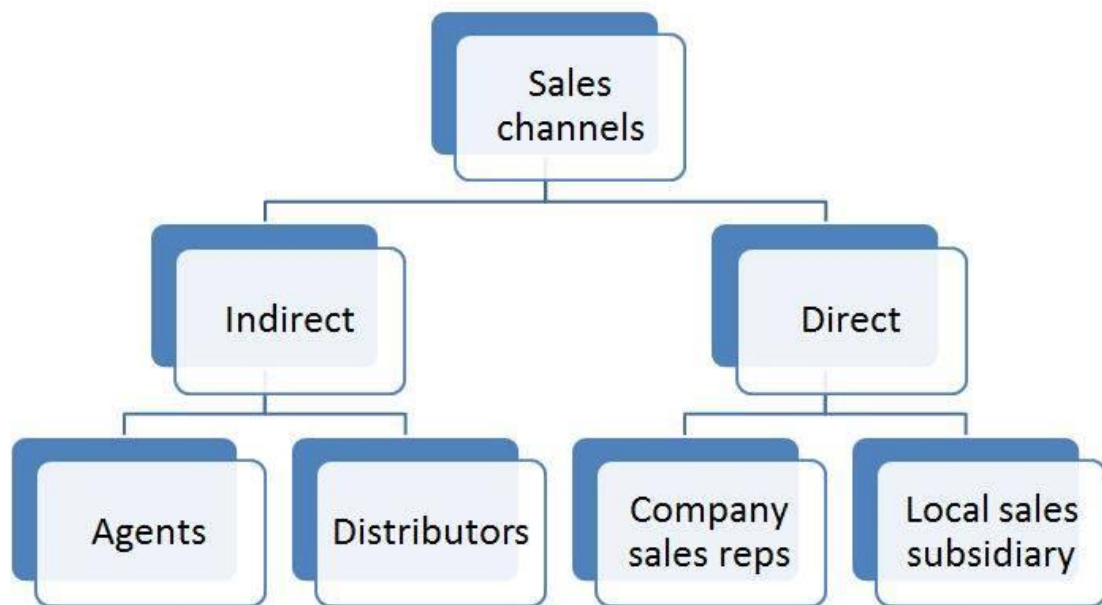


Figure 1.3. Hierarchy of sales channels. (Donaldson 2007)

Direct distribution channel does not include the third party in the sales process. In other words using the direct method means, to sell the products/services or contacting the prospects directly with an assist of the company's own sales force such as sales reps or local sales subsidiary. The primary advantage of direct method is that the company could learn about the customers' feelings and feedback due to the products.

Furthermore, direct channels imply the higher level of control in comparison with the other type. Therefore, the companies have a possibility to influence, change and evolve the sales processes and plans easily. (Donaldson 2007, 156 – 159; Chron, 2013)

In comparison with the direct method, there is an indirect sales type, which is about contacting the prospects and going through the sales process's steps through the use of third parties such as distributors and agents. The primary advantage of the following sales distribution type is that such sales channels as agents and distributors have a clear understanding of the market on which they work and has its own experience. This method might be relevant for the companies, which desire to enter new international market, but has lack of experience and resources in organizing its own sales force. (Donaldson 2007, 156 – 159; Chron 2013; VSL sales driven 2013)

To conclude, the company should carefully choose the sales method based on its primary targets and resources.

The sales process implies the primary steps from contacting prospective till closing the sale. The sales process should include all the necessary steps, which should be taken by the sales team for communicating with each sales leads. (VP of Strategy, LLC 2013)

The sales process or sales cycle might differentiate due to the type of the industry, however typically it includes the following steps: Locating and qualifying prospects, pre-call planning, approach alternative, handling objections, analyzing customer needs, product presentation, handling objections, closing sale, after sales service. The ration between the sales process steps is shown in the Process diagram. (De Pelsmacker 2010, 532-537)

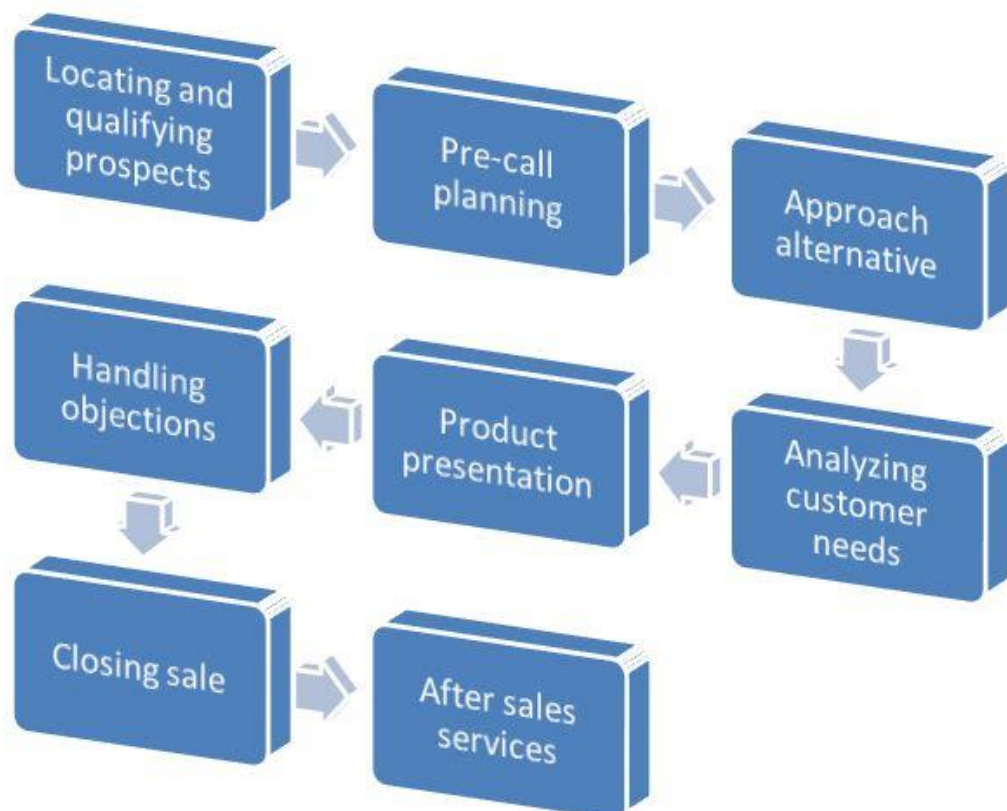


Figure 1.4. The sales process cycle. (De Pelsmacker 2010)

The first step in sales process is known as locating and qualifying the prospects. Primarily it intends the identifying the prospects, which should be contacted by sales team. It includes: building customer profile process, which is about identifying the principal characteristics, which should belong to the prospect; building prospect list infers creating the list of the prospects, which would treat the customer profile; qualifying prospects procedure is about determination the prospects' level of the need in the product and possibility in affording. (De Pelsmacker 2010, 532-537)

According to media purchasing behavior theory also financial situation of possible prospects should be considered in qualifying. Additionally salesforce should take in account product features of the prospects and type of business in order to offer the most suitable media product. (De Pelsmacker 2010, 532-537)

The second stage is pre-call planning. Before the sales contacting, the sales person should be prepared to this step. He/she have to identify the contacting purpose and to be prepared to answer prospect's questions. (De Pelsmacker 2010, 532-537)

Approach alternative divided into two stages. The first stage is known as gaining access, which simply means appoint a meeting with a prospect. In other words, the sales person should put an effort in giving the reasons to a prospect in making an appointment. The second step is establishing rapport intended to establish mutual relations between the sales person and the prospect. The following stage starts to appear, when the sales person entered the prospect's office. The first impression is highly significant on it. (De Pelsmacker 2010, 532-537)

The forth step in the sales process is analyzing the customer needs. The primary idea of it is to identify the prospect's substantial needs through asking questions and careful listening. (De Pelsmacker 2010, 532-537)

Sales person should identify the most important media purchasing criteria of potential prospect to proceed with particular presentation which outlines customer needs.

After fulfilling the analyses of the prospects need, there is a need to proceed the presentation concerning the product's features and the individual benefits, which might be obtained after product acquisition. There are basically three presentation types: tailored sales proposals intends the product presentation based on the prospect's analysis; organized presentation implies to present the product based on the checklist prepared before including the free in wording of the sales person; canned presentation is about to keep up strict structure of the presentation. (De Pelsmacker 2010, 532-537)

Moreover sales person should include in the presentation for the potential customer such criteria as frequency of certain media product, circulation of the media product, market nature and product nature. Sales person should specify particular criteria as it is significant factors that influence decision making process. (De Pelsmacker 2010, 532-537)

Handling the objectives is the process, which is, mostly, raised up after each presentation. The prospects starts to ask the questions and the sales person have to be prepared to reply. Additionally at this stage sales person can state importance and influence of media product on the targeted audience. (De Pelsmacker 2010, 532-537)

Sales closing is the last but one stage in the sales process. On this stage the sales person is in a great necessity to realize, when the prospect is ready to sign the paper and close the deal. (De Pelsmacker 2010, 532-537)

The final step is after sales service intended to accomplish few steps after closing the sales such as checking the prospects satisfaction with media product or service. This stage is necessary for retaining the customer for the future sales. (De Pelsmacker 2010, 532-537)

Pricing strategy is a part of marketing mix along with product, place and promotion. Pricing strategy is consider significant as in major times this is the factor that affect customers decision. Therefore it is crucial to position product or service in customers' minds in a right way. Pricing strategy does not have certain common models as it varies

in accordance to business. Nevertheless there are common factors that company has to consider planning pricing strategy. (VP of Strategy 2013)

Positioning of the product or service can affect the pricing dramatically. In case the product or service has valuable differentiation or competitive advantage then the price could be placed higher than rivals have. Nevertheless if the business market where company operates is high competitive there is a possibility to undercut the price. Another aspect is price sensitivity, which also can be called demand. Company should consider how customers perceive price in certain business environment when there are substitution products. (VP of Strategy 2013)

Furthermore company has to consider internal and external cost which will also affect pricing strategy. The price per product or services should cover costs. However if your cost are too high it is hard to calculate them into product when market expects a definite level of prices for certain products or services. Thus environmental factors as market price should be examined in advance. (VP of Strategy 2013)

Sales funnel is not an exclusion from the actual sales process. Otherwise it appears as the most significant phase, because it is responsible for identifying the amount of prospects and acquired revenue. Sales funnel is tightly connected with the stages of the sales process as it identifies the percentage of success on each stage. (Mars 2013)

As that was mentioned above sales funnel calculation consist of the stages taken from the sales process. As that was described in chapter “Sales process” the steps in the sales process might depends on the company’s preferences and industries. However, in order to bring the primary idea of the sales funnel calculation the unique steps were as an example, which are presented in diagram bellow and those are: Lead, prospect, qualified prospect, transacted. (Mars 2013)



Figure 1.5. Stages of the sales funnel (Mars 2013)

The first stage of the following sales process is cold call, when sales rep executes the phone call to the potential customer, who was not contacted before. After that sales rep put efforts to arrange a meeting with contacted prospect. Furthermore, sale rep performs the product presentation to potential client. In case if the prospect was interested in offer, both of those go to the next stage called “committed”, when sales rep informs the potential with payment, after-sales and other terms. The final stage is closing the deal, when potential customer is transacted into the existing. (Mars 2013)

By use of sales funnel calculation there is an opportunity to calculate the percentage of generated prospects into customers. Moreover, the sales lead has a possibility to see on which stage of the sales process, sales representatives have more faults. By having this knowledge sales lead is able to reflect on how to take away those failures and increase actual sales. (Mars 2013)

However, in order to execute the sales funnel calculation, the sales process should be activated already and sales data should be collected. Otherwise, there is no numbers, which could be analyzed. (Mars 2013)

The support policy is a crucial part of sales strategy which increases possibility to create higher brand loyalty. Support policy is a way to generate new business through referrals and differentiate company from rivals. Additionally a great and outstanding support and training of customers can be extra revenue for company. Market identifies variety of supports and trainings for customers such as knowledge support or training, 24h support, online tutorials, FAQs, customer forum and many others. Support policy can be reflected in sales process in after-sales/follow-up procedures. (VP of Strategy 2013)

To conclude current sales strategy is based on the theoretical aspects of the thesis and created in accordance of commissioner's need and interests. The steps in sales strategies were carefully examined and only the most important and relative aspect, factors and tools were considered in strategy. Sales strategy will be an assisting tool that is going to be a part of coordinated communication mix.

1.1 SWOT analysis of MMC

SWOT analysis is a useful research method which contributes the function of Identifying organizations Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. Compare with PESTEL it is more focused on researching an internal factors, however Threats and Opportunities concentrates on external environment (Tench, 2006, 189; Mind Tools)

Those resources and capacities, which organization is able to use as advantage for its operational processes are called **Strengths**. For example existing patents, customer and brand loyalty could appear as an advantage. (Quick MBA)

Main strength of MMC is quality media products and services for a competitive price. Another advantage of MMC is a knowledge of Russian tourist behavior, as company has valuable experience in Russian market. Additionally MMC's strength is reputation gained in first years.

Weaknesses are otherwise due to Strengths. These are the disadvantages, which exists in organization's management. For example, the level of customer loyalty is low or lack of access to meaningful databases or distribution channels. (Quick MBA)

One of the main weaknesses can be considered as geographical location. At the moment there is a lack of own representatives (agents) within Finnish market. Lack of knowledge of local Finnish market can be the main weakness. MMC possess only few media products at the moment, thus it is a disadvantage.

Opportunities are more about external environmental factors, which could bring new benefits for the organization. For example, government reduced the taxes for such type of industry in which an organization operates or demand started to grow for the organization's product and others. (Quick MBA)

The main opportunity is market demand, as research showed Russian tourist flow increased in last two years, thus Finnish companies spend more on attracting Russians to Finland. Additional opportunity for MMC is to consider to expand product range, what will make MMC more competitive on the market.

Threats are external factors, which could bring more challenges or barriers to the organization. As an example could be, when an organization violate the customer right which leads to reducing the reputation. (Quick MBA)

Main threat is competition, due to high demand in Russian tourist there are a lot of companies who can provide Finnish businesses with media products and services. Competitors' media product range is a threat due to few media products from MMC side. Price inflation is another issue that can affect MMC, in case there is inflation euro currency will raise, and Russian tourists will be affected by that, as the product price will raise accordingly.

1.2 Coordinated communication mix

Coordinated communication mix is a structured and grounded summary of promotional tools to be used in certain communication strategy in particular market environment. (Fill 2005, 351)

According to the previous theory there are 7 main tools in marketing communication mix which are advertising, sales promotion, exhibitions and trade shows, PR, e-commerce, direct marketing and personal selling. Additionally it was defined that certain research thesis is directed towards to B2B environment and seeks to find answers within B2B market.

In order to create coordinated communication mix investigators have taken in account all the necessary theory and made important conclusions. The research problem was stated as “How to effectively coordinate marketing communication/promotion mix to create/establish sustainability in sales?” thus bellow researchers will present planned coordinated communication mix in accordance with described theory.

Before establishing coordinated communication mix it was important to identify communication strategy, as it was previously described the most appropriate way to reach targeted audience is a pull strategy.

Since communication strategy was identified as pull strategy it was important to define which communication tools to be used in B2B environment to establish sustainability in sales for Makton Media Channels through communication mix. Subchapter 2.3 Marketing communication tools emphasizes that the most appropriate communication tools to be used in B2B environment are personal selling, direct marketing, sales promotion, PR and e-commerce. Nevertheless all of these tools need to be integrated and work in synergy with each other.

Therefore taking into consideration all the theory above researchers have created coordinated communication mix that should possibly assist commissioner and give answer to main question of the research.

Primary communication tool in coordinated promotional mix is personal selling which is going to work together with direct marketing and sales promotion. Investigators consider that planned sales strategy which is described in details in Subchapter 2.4 will be a valuable tool in coordinated communication mix. Nevertheless ultimate sales strategy will be proposed after empirical part will take place and questionnaires will be analyzed.

Bellow Figure 1.5 represents synergy of communication tools, which is a possible option of coordinated communication mix based on theory. However changes might appear after empirical part.

Coordinated communication mix will consist from 4 promotional tools, where primary tool will be personal selling. One of the most important parts in personal selling is sales strategy which directly effects sales efficiency. Thus sales strategy should be as effective as it is possible. Investigators propose to integrate direct marketing and personal selling in sales process.

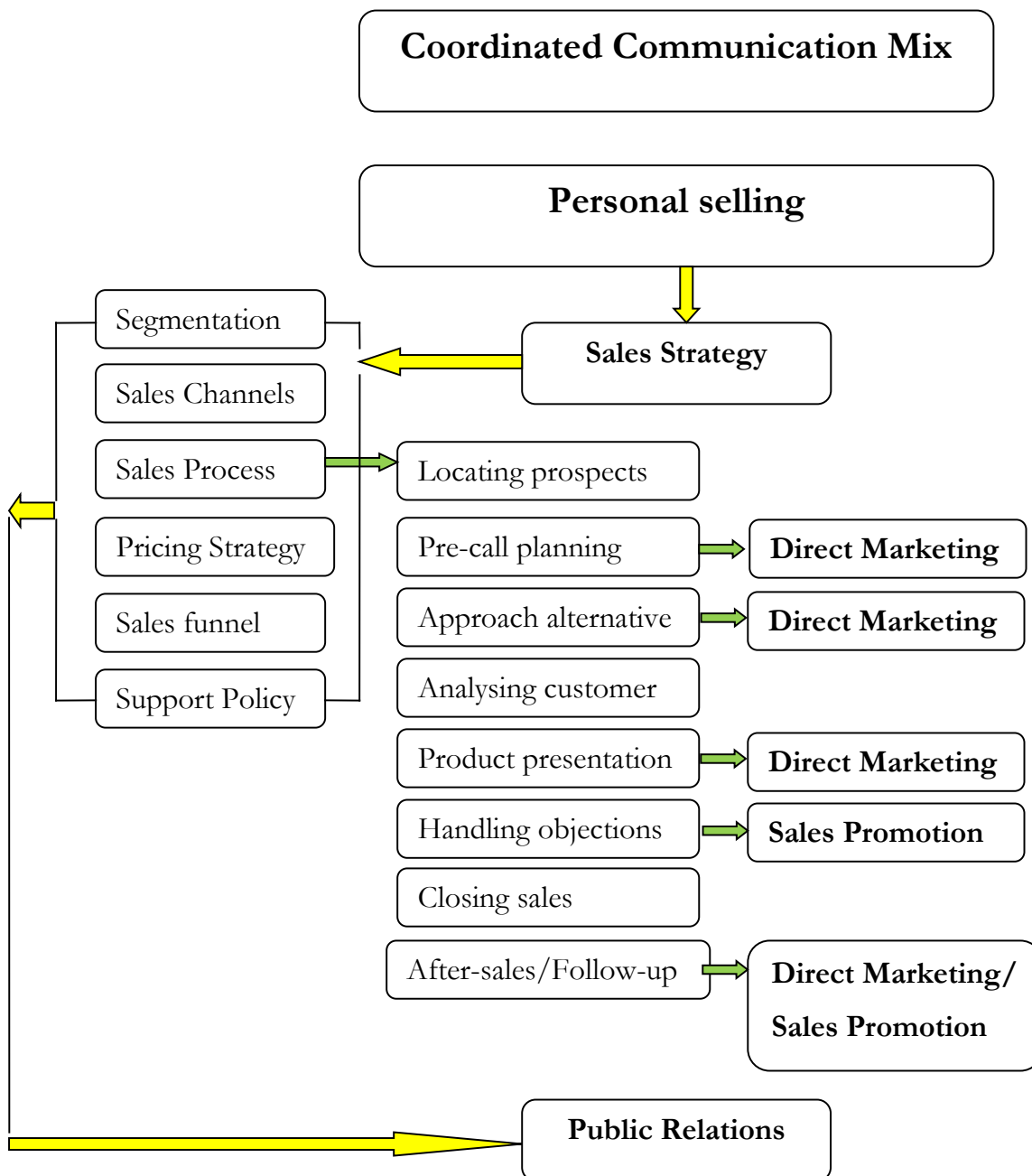


Figure 1.5. Coordinated Communication Mix based on theory.

2 Research approach and Methods

2.1 Qualitative approach

Qualitative research tries to find the answers to the questions why and how. The findings are usually gathered by interviewing the target group. The interviews are conducted with a small number of participants. Qualitative research method identifies data or information from a relationship point of view. Interviews and surveys are the most common ways to identify research problem in hand (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh & Sorensen 2010, 26-27; Malhotra 2010, 171).

The problem with qualitative data is that some data must be selected and it can easily happen that the data is not always represented in a reliable way. To be able to draw conclusions it is important to compare the results and conclusions with alternative theories and explanations. It is important to verify qualitative research to make it reliable. This means that the same research tools should always give the same results no matter when you do the research and that the results can be applied on a general level on other similar phenomena. The research must also be objective and the data collection and analyzing processes have to be fair and honest. (Denscombe 2010, 327-393; Dipstickresearch 2011; Jyskanalyse 2011)

Quantitative research studies the effects of gathering data or information consumed from various sources and later put together and distinguishing common information. By looking at gathered data researcher have to distinguish which variables influence others and research the common ground of them. The main idea of quantitative research is to ask respondent's opinions in a structured way, so that the commissioner will gather hard statistics, that can guide them in their market strategies. It is important to have large number of people/companies, and make sure that they are a good example of the target market. (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh & Sorensen 2010, 26-27; Malhotra 2010, 171)

When analyzing quantitative data in form of numbers, it is important to be aware of what type of data is used to understand the possibilities and limitations that are

associated with specific types of numeric data, because this can directly affect the conclusions that can be drawn from the data. It is important to try to see if there are any similarities, connections or differences between two or more data sets, and then to check if the results have only been a coincidence or if they have a real connection to each other, and how strong the possible connection is. The researcher should also check the differences between the variables, if one variable has caused another one and dependent the variables are on each other. Data is usually represented in forms of tables or charts to convey the results in a short and concise manner. Analyzing this type of material can be difficult, and when making the tables or charts it is important not to manipulate scales by exaggerating or belittling the importance of differences that occur and in that way mislead or give wrong information to others. (Denscombe 2010, 327-393; Dipstickresearch 2011; Jyskanalyse 2011)

When gathering data it is important to think about how to measure what is wanted and needed to measure in the best possible way and how to trust the data which is going to be gathered to be as fair and honest as possible. The data collection method affects the reliability of the research, it is important to understand that the method chosen should be applicable and solve the research problems in the best possible way. The data collection method also affects the validity of the research since all the methods are selective and some information is bound to fall off when selecting the most important answers that affect the conclusion. (Jacobsen 2006, 159)

Qualitative research is going to be used as a research method, as thesis writers are interested to gather as precise data is possible. Additionally qualitative research will include interviews of sales person who operated in B2B market in particular field, sales manager of MMC, existing customers, potential customers and one Media Company. Thus data gathering will be divided in 5 parts. This will be done with purpose to compare business thinking of sales force in current business environment, of MMC potential customers and existing ones, and to understand how MMC sales force view sales process. These 5 stages will let researchers to compare different opinions and provide valid result in respect of suggestions and recommendations.

There are several advantages in leading interview in order to gather data. Firstly interviews provide depth and detail of information. Additionally information is more reliable and credible. Furthermore accuracy and dependability of the answers can be check by observation and examination. (Krishnaswami & Satyaprasad 2010, 105)

2.2 Population and sampling

The “population” contains all members of a defined group that researchers are studying or collecting information on for data driven decisions. (Carroll 2012)

A sampling frame is a complete list of all the members of the population that researchers wish to study. Sample is a representative part of the population. It is a segment of the population which represent the population as a whole. (Kotler, Armstrong, Wong & Saunders 2008, 343)

Depending on the research type it might be impracticable to survey the entire population, for example manufacturer of cars has to test safety features of their product by test crashing. It would be impracticable to crash all of the cars. Research budget and time constraints might be a limiting factor as of how many samples researcher can afford to gather and process. All in all, sampling helps to save valuable resources whilst still providing usable data for analysis. (Krishnaswami & Satyaprasad 2010, 57)

The population of particular thesis are going to be potential customers, independent sales representative, inside sales representative of MMC, existing customer of Makton Media Channels and Sales Department manager itself. The population number is relatively small as investigators are intended to conduct qualitative research.

Researchers are interested to obtain qualitative responds that will provide maximum of interested data and information. Assumed population number is 5 different companies. The main criteria by which companies were chosen were operating environment, connection with Russian market, interest in particular media products, products or services company sell. Additionally it was important to interview right person who

could provide reliable information, thus position taking in company was important factor to consider. Due to anonymity all the names of interviews were hidden and changed on letters. Additionally independent sales person was chosen by following criteria: significant work experience in sales of media products. After listing criteria investigators found following companies and representatives relative to be interviewed: Restel Oy - international marketing company focused on developing hotels and restaurants in Finland was represented by Mr D, Brand Manage; Cursor Oy - Kotka-Hamina Regional Development Company represented by Mrs C, Project Manager; Massive Helisinki – media company that offers variety of media products and services represented by Mr E, CEO; Makton Media Channels – media company represented by Mrs B, Sales Manager; and independent sales person A who has more than 20 year experience in sales.

2.3 Data collection process

Data can be defined as relevant materials or evidences that come from past or from present sources, which are grounds for study and analysis. (Krishnaswami & Satyaprasad 2010, 89).

Data can be represented in different forms, such as numbers, words or images, particularly as dimension of observations of a set of variables. (Sachdeva 2009, 116)

Data is important in a research as the analysis of the accurate data, gives a possibility to define implication of the question and afterward it can provides investigator with the correct answer to the research problem. However data represented in the research problem should be relevant, reliable and credible in order to conduct study successfully. (Krishnaswami & Satyaprasad 2010, 90)

Therefore, the scientific process of measurements, test, analysis and outcomes depends on the collected data. There are two possible data collection sources which are primary source and secondary source. (Krishnaswami & Satyaprasad 2010, 91)

Primary source is used to preliminary materials in the research process. This is data that researcher collects oneself that has not been collected or gathered previously. Researcher collects data directly from the sources. Data can be acquired through interviews, observations and surveys. Primary data is reliable way to gain information and data as the investigator knows what the sources are since he picked them himself. Primary source requires researcher to interact with source directly and examine information. (Krishnaswami & Satyaprasad 2010, 92)

There are several ways to collect primary data for the researcher. The most commonly used methods are 1) observation, 2) interviewing, 3) mail survey, 4) experimentation, 5) simulation, 6) projective technique. (Krishnaswami & Satyaprasad 2010, 93)

Interviewing is one of the most famous methods of data collection. And this method is going to be used in the research for Makton Media Chennels. Interview can be defined as a conversation process between researcher and respondent, in order to collect information appropriate to the study. (Krishnaswami & Satyaprasad 2010, 104)

Interviewing process is usually more superior to other data collection methods. People prefer to have a short conversation than to write a response. (Krishnaswami & Satyaprasad 2010, 105)

The data gathering process will be divided in 5 parts. As it was mentioned before there are going to be 5 main respondents: sales person/ free agent, sales representative from MMC, potential customer of MMC, existing customer of MMC and Media Company. Also aspects that influence potential and existing customers choice will be examined (which marketing communication tools influence their decision most).

These are sources which encompass data that have been gathered and observed previously for another purpose. **Secondary data** also has a name of second-hand data version. Secondary data is cheapest and fastest way to access data. Secondary data can be financial reports, annual reports of the company, data provided by government

departments. In secondary data researcher has no control over collection and classification. (Krishnaswami & Satyaprasad 2010, 92)

Investigators conducted 5 different interviews collecting primary data from various individuals. Each interview took more than 1 hour to collect necessary data for research. Bellow in the table can be seen procedure of data collection.

List of interviewees	Company	Position	Date for interview	Place
1 A	Independent sales person	Sales person	01.11.13	Helsinki, Finland
2 B	Makton Media Channels	Sales Manager	05.11.13	Vyborg, Russia
3 C	Cursor Oy	Project Manager	12.11.13	Kotka, Finland
4 D	Restel Oy	Brand Manager	14.11.13	Helsinki, Finland
5 E	Massive Helinki Oy	CEO	15.11.13	Helsinki, Finland

2.4 Interview Questions and questionnaire

Questionnaire is a formalized set of questions for finding information from defendants. Classically a questionnaire is only one part of a data-collection package and also some reward, gift or payment is offered to respondents. (Malhotra 2010, 335)

Questionnaires have many advantages. For instance questionnaire is cheap to implement and standardized answers make it easy to collect data. Respondents have to be able to read the questions in the questionnaire so the questions must be simple and well formulated. Questionnaire should also avoid leading or biasing questions as well as generalizations and estimates. Questionnaire can be made by mail, e-mail, online, by telephone or face to face. (Malhotra 2010, 337-349)

There are various question types. In Dichotomous questionnaire the respondent has two options. In Nominal-polytomous questionnaire the respondent has more than two unordered options. In Ordinal-polytomous questionnaire the respondent has more than two ordered options and in (Bounded) Continuous questionnaire the respondent is presented with a continuous scale. (Malhotra 2010, 284-344)

Investigators are going to conduct a face-to-face interviews, therefore questionnaires are going to have semi-structured form. Additionally researchers composed different questions according to the companies profile, however all the questions have almost the same context, which is relevant to the researched topic. Nevertheless in order to show importance of certain thesis, researchers composed set of questions that will be a guidance during the interviews.

The questions for outside sales person, who works or worked in local Finnish media advertising business environment, are included in the 1st cycle of questionnaire. Questions to the free agent are represented in Attachment 1. Aim of the questions is to investigate sales behavior of experienced sales person in current business market, to understand actual/practical sales strategy of knowledgeable sales person, the way skilled sales agent operate in sales process. By interviewing free agent investigators will clarify the most important aspect is sales strategy, sales behavior, pre-communication,

communication and post-communication with potential and existing customers. Thus there will be possibility to understand sales strategy from the sales persons' point of view. Answers to these questions in first stage will allow evaluating how successful sales person practically conduct sales and compare it to theory. Certain answers will make valuable outcomes also in order to compare them with sales behavior of sales representative from commissioned company.

2nd stage aims to interview ***sales representative of Makton Media Channels***. 2nd cycle purpose is to investigate actual sales strategy of the MMC. The interest of particular interview is the same as for the sales person from outside the MMC, nevertheless the aim is to understand actual sales process of MMC and the way they communicate with existing and potential customers. This stage will also affect future suggestions and recommendations of sales strategy. Collected responds to these questions will allow comparing ways of leading sales process from perspective of experienced outside sales person and Makton Media Channels sales force. Analyses and comparison will lead to possible gaps that Makton Media Channels has to cover due to that company is novel on the Finnish market.

Questionnaire is presented in Attachment 2.

3rd questionnaire will be aimed to interview ***existing customers***. Questions for 3rd cycle and 4th cycle has approximately the same content as the aim of these cycles is to understand how company should behave and act in order to generate effective sales strategy. Nevertheless 3rd cycle is going to be concentrated more on ongoing communications and sales process. Answers to these questions will provide clarity to the mistakes and will give possibility to understand which parts of communication and sales process need to be strengthen or improved. Additionally questions in 3rd cycle will cover understanding why existing customers buy certain media products.

Questionnaire is presented in Attachment 3.

As it was mentioned in previous subchapter 4th cycle have similar questions as the 3rd cycle. However, 4th cycle has aim to question ***potential customers*** about their existing partners in media advertising business, about their satisfaction level and find out what

are the aspects that are the most significant when chose media agency to cooperate with. Moreover this questionnaire will provide investigators with understanding how and why potential customers choose media agency by which criteria. Questionnaire is presented in Attachment 4.

The 5th questionnaire is presented in Attachment 5. The aim of current questionnaire to **Media Company** is to understand how Media Company operates in Finnish market, how company sell their products, get new customer, how they maintain relations with customers and keep their loyalty. Certain answers could provide valid information that might be used to create coordinated communication mix for commissioned company.

2.5 Validity and Reliability

Validity is significant part of the project. That gives possibility to the reader to understand if the findings are valid and certain research has grounds.

Designing research, valid research instruments should be used. What means that research instruments should adequately measure and reflect true concept that investigators attempt to measure. (Malhotra 2010)

Validity is the credibility of the research, and it includes transfer- and applying of data, and the analyses of it. For a research to be valid the research instruments must give the same results during different occasions, the respondents have to give the same type of answers to the same type of questions and their responses must be generally consistent. Different researchers should also come to the same conclusions when looking at the same data and the analysis itself should be so properly done that no other competing theories would give better explanations to the subject. (Denscombe 2010, 362-363)

In qualitative research the validity means the researchers ability to describe the entire research process and how researchers will come to the final conclusions. The researchers must prove that the data is going to be collected in a systematic and honest way, and how the results are going to be reached during the entire research process. This can be done so that the researcher describes how the data is going to be collected,

according to what criteria the participants are going to choose, what is going to happen during the analyze process and what kind of understanding (prejudice, background, experience) the researchers have towards the research. To check the validity of the research the researcher must also check the research problems several times and through different angels and aspects to make sure that the research problems will contribute to the research. (Malterud 2008, 157-165, 166-176)

In certain research validity measures if the qualitative method and questionnaire provides researchers with the valid data. Additionally validity shows if the amount of interviewed people can give valid grounds for the research.

This was a qualitative research, which aim was to provide answer to the research problem: “How to effectively coordinate marketing communication/promotion mix to create/establish sustainability in sales?” Research problem fitted to the needs and interest of the commissionaire. Investigators have started with careful examination of theoretical part of the research and have gathered all the needed information have been taken into consideration in order to avoid risks in questionnaire.

Therefore investigators divided questionnaire in 5 different parts and are going to interview different people who are related to certain business environment and will allow to make constructive outcomes.

Since qualitative research is not about the amount of collected data but about the quality of the respondents, researchers have targeted people who could provide the most precise and relevant data and information for the questionnaire.

Reliability in a research means the degree of how trustworthy, true and honest the research is. Reliability is often considered as consistent or repeated measurement where no occasional errors are allowed to interfere with the data collection or the analysis of the results. Reliability is often used to describe how a good data collection is going to be done and how well it measures what is wanted to measure. It is important to under-

stand that a high reliability does not guarantee high validity whereas high validity requires high reliability. (Eki.mdh 2003; Infovoice 2002)

Within qualitative research reliability is about describing the data that is going to be collected and processed in an interesting, trustworthy and comprehensible way. This means that the instruments used for measurement (technical equipment and the research objects) are reliable and that they fulfil their purpose in a reliable way. The researcher must also prove his or her ability to make good observations or interviews, the experience in collecting data and the quality of the tutoring for this kind of a research. (Eki.mdh 2003; Infovoice 2002)

Questions for each stage are constructed regarding to theoretical framework and cover all the aspects that need to be investigated in order to answer main research problem. In the 1st stage researchers are going to question free agent A who has 20 year experience working as a sales person, who is used to work in media advertising agencies. During the 2nd stage sales representative from MMC will be interviewed. Thus certain information will be valuable and reliable as it will be primary data. In the 3rd stage researchers will interview existing customer represented by project manager C from Cursor Company. In the 4th stage investigators are going to interview potential customer represented by brand manager D from Restel Oy Company. All the respondents are involved in sales management process, thus collected data will be reliable.

Researchers interviewed only those representatives of the companies that have direct relation to the marketing and especially sales. Thus information provided by respondents has value and is reliable.

3 Key results and analysis

First of all researchers are going to present collected answers to all the questions by introducing responds to each questionnaire separately. All the answers will give a possibility to a reader to see how investigators are comparing data and how researchers use collected data in further ‘Suggestions and recommendations’ chapter.

In order to provide valid suggestion and recommendation, and answer thesis research problem initially researchers are going to conclude collected results. Conclusion will be written in two parts. 1st part will reflect data collected from individuals involved in selling media products and 2nd part will represent data collected from companies involved in buying media products. Thus such reflection will allow reader to understand perspectives from different angles. Additionally such division will help to analyze explored topic and systemize collected data.

3.1 Question analysis

In this research plan was used qualitative method to collect data and information to answer research problem. The process of data collection was divided in five stages. That were described above as in ‘Data collection’ chapter as in ‘Questions and questionnaire’ chapter.

Collected data will provide answer to research problem stated in beginning of the thesis work. In order to deliver accurate results researchers have interviewed various individuals that allow viewing current topics from different angles. Collected data will be presented below.

First interviewer was independent free agent, who has work experience in sales more than 20 years. Due to anonymity issues he will be identified as person “A”. A was selling different media product in last 20 years. Thus he is reliable and valid source of gathering information and data needed for research.

Second questionnaire was designed for the sales manager B, of the commissioned company, who leads the sales team, which sells the media products on the Finnish market. The purpose of this research is to get familiar with the communication and sales strategy of MMC.

Third interview was executed for existing customer. The primary aim of this session was to understand the purchasing behavior of the media user in general. Furthermore indicators were looking forward to study the experience of existing customer encountered during cooperation with commissioned company with an eye to find out the strength and weaknesses, which should be improved for making the company's communication strategy more efficient. The interview was person C, who currently works in Cursor Oy Company as a project manager. This company has already worked with Makton Media Channels approximately one year. This company appears as key account of MMC, because of the long term contracts and size of the company

In fourth stage researchers have interviewed Mr D, brand manager of Restel Oy. Restel Oy is one of the biggest hotel chains in Finland that offers different types of accommodation all around Finland. Thus certain company is in interest and appear to be a potential customer of Makton Media Channels. Questions were divided in two main parts: questions concerning sales strategy/process and regarding marketing communication.

Fifth questionnaire was conducted with media agency located in Helsinki city center. Massive Helsinki operates in media market since 2008, offering to business different kind of advertising solutions. Mr E, founder and CEO of the company was interviewed in order to gather valid and reliable data.

3.1.1 Key account segmentation analyses

First question aimed to find answer concerning **key account segmentation**. How the company should make segmentation. Students aimed to find criteria by which it is better to identify key account.

Mr A suggest first of all to segment clients into two different types, for instance, big players in Finnish market those companies who has a huge impact on local business and has huge demand on their products and services. The second group is those business that has tight connection to Russian market, those who do business with Russians, sell or buy products. Additionally key account need to be approached with accurate preparation. Mr A states that is it significant in prior to analyses business company is in, to understand what is the potential target audience of the group. Thus sales force will be prepared for the first contact the will make vital outcomes for future cooperation.

Researchers asked second interviewer a question by which criteria the company choose the **key accounts**. Respondent emphasized such factors as: Company size; Long term contracts; Chain companies and Tourist offices. The first two criteria which are company size and long term contract are important in terms financial aspect, because big companies and those who conclude long-term contracts bring the maximum profit to the company. Chain companies and Tourist offices are the prospects, which might bring new customers to the company or create the creditability for potentials.

Mr E, from Massive Helsinki commeted following about question how to **find potential customers (key accounts)**. Mr E told that sales representative had a mission to find customers who have a need in certain products and services. Massive Helsinki aimed to find clients who are able to pay for the products and services and who are ready for long-term relations. Mr Valle says that it is easier to have healthy communication with the clients who want to establish long-term relations, as the relations are more trustworthy and loyal.

Moreover researchers wanted to know *how to attract potential customers (key accounts)* in order to make them interested in the product from the first contact. Mr D says that sales person should be honest; for instance, if he/she knows that the media product that companies are using at the moment do not bring expected outcomes, sales agent must state it and offer most effective alternative to the company.

Moreover investigators wanted to understand what kind of *commercial offer* should be prepared for the **potential clients (key accounts)**. Particular question was asked to find out if media agencies should consider tailor-made offer or general one. Brand Manager of Restel Oy state that it is risky to customize offer to much, if media agency promise to the company to much and afterwards media agency do not succeed to provide promised outcomes or services, than it ruins relationships with as an existing as with potential customers. Thus Mr D says that more common commercial offer should be made as a first touch. However, if the sales person have a chance to meet a representative of potential company, to get to know companies operational environment, aims and targeted audience, afterwards sales representative should prepare a customized commercial offer according to the preferences of the potential or existing customer.

Students were interested in question about *aspects that raise interest of the potential customers (key accounts) towards media products*. Aim of current question was to find out which criteria are important for potential clients. Mr D considers that the main aspect when media agencies sell their products is the amount of actual audience that can be reached through offered products and services. Additionally companies are interested to know the profile of the audience (demographics, economic) if the offered media product can communicate with targeted audience.

Additionally students asked question regarding interest towards *Russian tourists as key accounts*. Mr D says that Restel Oy is very interested in Russian tourist, as it is a huge potential market. However difficulties appear in a process of choosing media agency, as Restel Oy do not know companies behavior and is afraid not to succeed in

set aims. Restel Oy considers that E-commerce is the most suitable tool for the company to attract target group. When Restel Oy considers to advertise its products and services in Russia, they prefer to choose E-commerce as it can be traced and people behavior/reaction can be evaluated. Restel Oy cannot trust advertising in magazines or billboards in Russia, as it is hard to measure, how many people will see ad and will it provide benefits for Restel Oy. Also Restel Oy use a wholesaler which sales packages in local business in Russia.

3.1.2 Sales channels analysis

Second question aimed to give clarity and to understanding which ***sales channels*** are better to be used in particular case of MMC, thus Mr A was asked question about direct and indirect sales channels. Mr A said that he used to work as a sales representative of the company and as a free agent. Based on his experience Mr A says that when company use indirect channel free agents are not loyal enough to the company, as there are a lot of rival companies who headhunt good sales people. Moreover free agent is not tightly affiliated to the company, as the free agent can freely come and leave the business. Thus employment should be continuous and work force (sales representatives) should be the same, as the longer they are in the company the more they understand the overall business of the company as the products and services. Additionally when company has sales representatives internal relationship are trustworthy and loyal. Another important aspect that Mr A states is that the paid salary to free agent and to sales representative is mainly the same, thus it is more effective to have direct channel when it comes to sales force.

Project manager B of MMC, stated that MMC currently uses two ***sales channels*** (direct and indirect). The company employs three sales people, who brought approximately 16 customers to the company, earn 14600 euro per one month. Concerning an indirect sales channel, company use 3 Finnish media agencies and those appear as company's distributors. Those media agencies brought 9 more Finnish customers and those currently bring 9000 euros monthly. Media agencies work on the 15% commission base.

Additionally students were interested to know which ***sales channels*** Massive Helsinki use to sell their products and services. Massive Helsinki employed one person as a free agent, as it was stated above, Massive Helsinki did not have any clients at the very begging and there were no skilled employees who could execute sales in a professional way. Thus there was a need to employ one. Mr E states that the benefit was that free agent was not connected by the strict contract to the company, and if Massive Helsinki would not need sales agent any more they could dismiss him at any time. The only challenge that Mr E stated were difficulties in communication with sales agent. Moreover Mr E stated that to stimulate interest of the sales agent they were providing him with bonuses according to the executed amount of successful sales.

3.1.3 Sales process analysis

Additionally student were interested in ***sales process***, and wanted to find out opinion of Mr A as an independent expert. Mr A specifies that each company has their own sales process and there is no certain template of sales process and it depends personally on the sales person how he/she executes the sales. However there are four main steps that Mr A outline in his interview: cold call, personal meeting, offer presentation, closing the deal. Mr A emphasizes that sales process can be drawn in accordance to the sales manager how he/she suppose it should look like according to the company's business environment, and products and services. Afterwards sales process steps can be modified in accordance to the real life process.

Interviewing party, MMC's manager B, has mentioned 7 stages in the ***sales process*** and those are: Client search; Finding the decision making person; Customer contact; Meeting arrangement; Analyzing the customer's needs and possibilities; Handling objections; Closing the deal.

Investigators asked question regarding ***sales process***. They wanted to know how Massive Helsinki perceives sales process and what primary objections in sales process. Mr E stated that sales process was adopted by sales agent, not by the company. Free agent wasn't obliged to follow the sales process of the company, his aim was to

generate sales. Mr E specified that the primary aim were simple, to get new clients and create brand awareness.

Mr E gave comments regarding about ***sales strategy***, which is a part of sales process within Massive Helsinki. First question was aimed towards key accounts, how company create clients list. Mr Valle says that company aims various types of customers, nevertheless as each company Massive Helsinki prefer clients who are able to pay for the work. Moreover another significant aspect is communication with the customer. Massive Helsinki value healthy communications with the clients, MH prefer transparent relations with customers. Mr E states that loyalty of the clients is generated from accurate communications.

Investigators were interested to know if Massive Helsinki has ***sales department and how they conduct sales*** within the company. Current question tend to bring clarity to the overall understanding of sales department within media company. Mr E stated that Massive Helsinki used to have a senior sales person, who was extremely skilled in sales. Sales person was executing his tasks alone, as it was an initial step in sales for the company. Massive Helsinki considered that there was a need to understand how the sales will affect their business. In two years sales person acquired a lot of new clients, what created weighty brand awareness within local market. Afterwards brand name worked for company and there was no need for sales representative any more, as the amount of work was high for number of personnel in company.

3.1.4 Price analysis in personal selling

Another aspect that needed to be examined was ***pricing strategy***. Question about how and why company have to have a pricing strategy was asked with aim to understand how the price for the MMC products and services should be made by which means and which aspects is significant to take into consideration. Mr A states that price of the product and services should reflect actual quality. Additionally price should be relevant to the market price due to high competition in particular media business environment. However Mr A emphasize that these steps must be considered

in the beginning. Nevertheless company may increase prices but only after the company gained trust, loyalty and awareness on the current market.

Researchers aimed to understand how **funnel calculation** supposed to be made. Answer to certain questions were inquired in order to find out what is the right way to calculate funnel, which aspect should be examined more accurately. Additionally funnel calculation question aimed to find key aspects on the right way to control sales force in sales process. As funnel calculation concentrates on the steps in sales process that need accurate number calculation, students asked Mr A how to draw a right scheme of funnel calculations. Mr A emphasized that funnel calculation is important part for sales management as it is a tool to control sales process. However Mr A says that it is hard to state certain numbers of every step in funnel calculation when company is about to launch business in a new market. As funnel calculation depends on the performance of each sales representative within the company. Thus usually funnel calculation is possible to carry out when sales manager is acquainted with sales skills and abilities of each representative. Nevertheless Mr A was asked about salary and commission that should be paid to sales representatives. He states that company should consider ratio of salary and commission. If the salary is low, for instance sales person is junior seller, than the commission should be higher, and other way round for the senior seller.

Also manager B, from MMC company, commented regarding the **pricing strategy**, that the company does not have a clear strategy; however the price can varies from the region. For example, company cut the prices for the Northern-East region, because of the high competition over there, while for the central Finland the prices on its general level.

Cursor Oy representative responded to question concerning **price flexibility** and **quick response**. The interviewer C told that importance of those factors varies from case to case. For example if there is a need to acquire the product and need to be customized, the speed of response is essential. The price should correspond to the quality and to the market price as well.

Respondent D from Restel Oy was asked questions regarding overall sales behavior of potential customers. How they perceive sales communication and general sales process. First question was asked with the aim to understand how ***price is important to potential clients*** and to find out how sales representatives should act in sales process. Brand Manager from Restel Oy states price flexibility and response depends on the product and services that are offered to the company. In hotel industry, purpose of the advertising is highly considered, flexibility and quick response depends if it tactical marketing or brand building. Nevertheless price flexibility is perceived as a significant aspect, as usually company has limited budget.

Also students wanted to understand how Massive Helsinki ***choose the price for their media products***. Mr E identified that prices are relevant to the market average price for current product and services. However Mr E says that in case the product needs more time to work with it, price higher than in the market.

3.1.5 After-sales service analysis

Investigators tended to find out how ***aftersales service*** should look like according to Mr A 20 year experience. Mr A states, that is it a sales representatives responsibility to get in touch with clients after the product or service is sold, to figure out his opinion about what was done.

Manager B, from MMC company emphasize that the company executes ***after sales service*** before one month when the contract with the customer will be expired.

Respondent C pointed out that ***after sales service*** phone call is more important for the seller, than for the buyer, because the second party does not acquire most of the benefit out of rather than the caller.

Mr D commented to the question regarding ***aftersales service*** in sales process. Aim was to understand how Restel Oy perceive after-service. Mr D says that companies prefer to receive a phone call after the deal is closed and schedule a post-campaign

meeting (feedback meeting), where both sides discuss outcomes of latest media product provided by the agency.

Students asked Mr E about ***aftersales service***, how it should look like according to Massive Helsinki experience. Mr E said that Massive Helsinki always arrange aftersales (post production) meeting, where company and client discuss outcomes and campaign.

3.1.6 Communications process analysis

Last question regarding ***communication tools*** that assist sales representative during a sales process was asked. Certain question has aim to find out which communication tool should sales representative use in order to succeed in sales process. Mr Byhoholm emphasized that sales promotion can be used as a tool to provide discount for the products and services sold. Additionally he mentioned that exhibitions and e-commerce can be used to promote company in long-term. However direct marketing is effective for aftersales or for ongoing sales process. Direct marketing, such as e-mailing is useful for communication as it ease the process and saves time.

Researchers also questioned manager B the questions concerning the ***communication tools***, which are for communicating with prospects. The primary communication, which supports the personal selling, is exhibitions. As that was stated by the sales lead most of the actual customers were reached from trade fairs. The final communication tool is direct marketing, such as phone calling and e-mailing. It is used for contacting the customer on a distance.

Project manager C from Cursor company was also asked questions about the ***communication tools***, which are used by interviewing party during media choosing procedure. The respondents told that the primary communication channel used for media choice is partners' opinion and recommendations. It is a fact that reliable partners would not promote the company if it does not deserve. Furthermore, direct marketing also appears as a communication tool, which influence the decision making process towards the media products. Based on interviewer statement all electronic commercial letters, which come to the company's electronic mail, are investigated.

However, those letters should be short, concrete and should contain the pricelist as well, otherwise the creditability to offered product might be ruin and the letter will be transferred to spam. What is more, the interviewed company pointed out the fact that it does not look for media companies. First of all, it is quite risky to look forward for the media company and rely on beautiful webpages only. Secondly, interviewed company receive tons commercial offer per day, thus there is no actual need to look for media, because media comes by itself.

Personal selling is an interpersonal communication tool. Therefore respondent C was asked question regarding communication tool, especially personal selling. Interviewee C stated that the significance of the **personal selling** depends on the product's complexity the same as with the quick response. Furthermore, correspondents found from interviewer that there is no actual difference for the buyer between free agents and own sales representative of the media company, until there is no misunderstanding in communication between the agent and the company. Additionally respondent C answered question regarding **communication language**. For the respondent C there is no matter which **communication language** to choose (Finnish or English). The reason is that Cursor works internationally and except both languages for communication including the e-mails, which afterwards must be documented. Researchers were also asking about the **communications tools** (telephone, e-mail, face-to-face meeting) should be undertaken. The interviewer told that e-mail, should be used on initial communication stage. Furthermore, phone called should be undertaken after e-mail letter for explaining the details and for meeting arrangement. Finally, meeting should be proceed for negotiation process and explaining how the product could customized due to the customer's need. The primary aspects, which may raise the buyer's attention, are the following: which audiences are covered by the media channel; how and where it is distributed; the approximate price per one prospect.

Mr D from Restel Oy responded to questions about **personal selling** and communication tools. Mr D emphasize that personal selling is considered as an important aspect, especially when relationships between seller and the buyer are built on trust and loyalty. Additionally researchers were interested in preferred **interaction**

language during the sales strategy. Mr D states that big companies that operate all over the Finland do not have any bias towards communication language. Nevertheless he suggests leading communication in local, Finnish language, if company wants to succeed in Finnish market. He outlines this point as being professional and being able to conduct meeting with all kind of personalities and companies in Finnish market. Additionally Mr D states that companies which are located in Finland are easier to communicate. However Mr D said that if Restel Oy considers to place advertisement in Russia, they do prefer Finish company, which have a finish speaking work force who has Russian cultural background/mentality. It means that these employees do know how Russians think and react.

Investigators consider that people and companies perceive communication differently. Therefore students were interested to know how Mr D distinguish 3 main **communication methods**: telephone, e-mail, and face-to-face communications. Brand Manager states that initial contact should be made by phone as it more effective than email, as majority of companies nowadays see e-mails as spam. However also an e-mail can be sent to a potential customer as first contact. Mr D tells that face-to-face communication might happen only in case if Restel Oy is interested in offer.

Moreover investigators aimed to understand which **communication tools** influence most the decision of choosing media agencies for Restel Oy. Mr D emphasize that word of mouth is the most reliable tool when Restel Oy choose media agency to cooperate with. For instance direct marketing is not that effective in terms of choosing media agency, as majority of emails are considered as a spam, thus such companies as Restel Oy try to use trustworthy companies.

Respondent E from company Massive Helsinki gave comments towards question regarding communication tools used to promote company's brand name. Mr E states that media agency Massive Helsinki has used personal selling as a tool to sell their products and services. This tool had most successful outcomes. Nevertheless when company managed to create good brand awareness on the local market, afterwards only word-of-mouth was creating awareness and was promoting company. It took

about two years for Massive Helsinki in personal selling to generate successful awareness. However media agency does use E-commerce to promote company. In the company's web page are posted works that were produced for different businesses.

Researchers wanted to know which ***communication tools*** influence and support personal selling process. Mr E defined that even though sales agent executed almost on individual bases Massive Helsinki was supporting his activity by attending different exhibitions, where company was promoted.

3.1.7 Media product analysis

Another question was aimed to find out the ***media trends***, which are currently popular on the Finnish market and used for attracting Russian customers.

Correspondent indicated that the company does not stick to the only media type and varies its chose from time to time. However, the biggest share is taken by new media and it takes 70%, while the rest is taken by the traditional media. Furthermore, Cursor Company invites editorials and performs excursions for them, while afterwards those write their experiences in online blogs and magazines' articles. Moreover, the interviewer stated that company use Social Network such as Vkontakte (Russian Social Network).

Investigators were wondering why there is such an interest in the Russian market. The respondent stated that the Russia is a huge neighbor market with huge perspectives, thus it might be efficient in financial terms of the whole country.

Another question was about the ***location of media companies***, which Cursor use for planning and choosing the media for attraction of Russian. The respondent indicated that it depends on the case. For example if there is a need to create an advertising design thus better to use Finnish company, because it is easier to communicate. However, if there is a need to use the media channel, which distributes on the Russian territory, in this case the company would use the service of Russian media company.

3.1.8 MMC's media products analysis

Also investigators were interested concerning the features that pushed Cursor Company to acquire the ***media product from Makton Media Channels***. The first aspect was the actual products' prices, which in times cheaper than the market price. Furthermore, that was pointed out that price correspondent to the product quality on a high level. Finally, the interviewer told some positive feedback about concrete media channel, which is "Terve" magazine. Was stated that the magazine is fresh itself and correspond to the interests of its audiences.

After finishing the questions about the communication tools and sales strategy, researchers asked the project manager of Cursor Oy to tell about the ***experience encountered during cooperation with MMC Oy***. The first question was about the communication channels through which the initial contact was appeared between those companies. The interviewer stated that they have started to cooperate with MMC after partner's recommendation.

Concerning MMC's ***weaknesses in communication procedure***, the interviewer pointed out only few. One of those was concerning the payment statements, when MMC billing Cursor. Invoice sent by media company should clearly state the list of products/service that must be paid. Furthermore, MMC editorials who write the article should pay a bit more attention towards text editing procedure.

Most of the time the whole communication between MMC and Cursor occurs on Russian language, because Russian is the mother tongue of individuals from both companies. Thus the communication language did not affect business negotiation process. However, as that was stated before originally Cursor use English or Finnish as a communication language. Therefore, all invoices and important e-mail should be sent on one of those languages, because afterwards those letters must be documented.

Concerning ***after sales service***, respondent told that it would be great if the media company would provide with the suggestions concerning the message that should be spread through particular media channel.

3.2 Analysis of media sellers

Firstly investigators are going to analyze *marketing communication* related question. According to collected data researchers can state that primary communication tool used in selling media product is personal selling. Nevertheless each individual has also stated that there is a supplementary communication tools that assists in selling media products. Word-of-mouth is the most common tool that appears as assistance to personal selling. Word-of-mouth is used to ease the process of finding prospects and it helps to create brand awareness, loyalty of existing customers and potentials. Additionally exhibitions and sales promotion were stated as extra tools in communications. Exhibition is a communication tool to present companies' media products and services, as to establish necessary networks and contacts in order to ease the personal selling process. Direct marketing is perceived as a communication tool that is used after the initial contact took place. Mainly direct marketing is considered as e-mail in certain business environment. Moreover e-commerce is used to promote company (sell company). E-commerce is used in traditional way, companies have own webpage where are reflected companies activities, products and services available to customers.

Secondly researchers are going to look into *sales strategy* related questions. Each individual has stated different opinion about key account management. MMC representative consider that company size, year based contract, chain companies and tourist offices are the aspects that outline key accounts, as profit and amount of clients depend on particular characteristics. At the same free agent thinks that is it significant to segment customers by the level of relation of Finnish companies to Russian market. This means that companies are interested in Russian audience and eager to attract those to Finnish market or sell those Finnish products or services. Meanwhile interviewed Finnish media agency consider their key accounts as clients who are able to pay for the provided services and can maintain and/or lead healthy relations. Because quality of provide services depend on described features of key accounts.

Analyzing ***sales channels*** of MMC students found out that company use both direct and indirect channels. Direct channel is used more as company has more sales representatives (direct channel) than media agency (distributor) (indirect channel). Having own sales representatives MMC benefit more as they bring customers to company, and agency can control them. Additionally sales representatives are more loyal to company. However media agency (distributor) also brings advantages to MMC media agency (distributor) that operates in Finnish market help MMC to explore local Finnish market and they bring additional customers. However media agencies (distributors) are less controlled and can easily leave company. Individual sales person states the same opinion about channels as a sales representative of MMC. Nevertheless interviewed media agency consider that that direct channel should be used, as media products should be customized in order to be sold, what leads to necessity of sales representative in the company.

Theoretical framework outlines that there is no unique ***sales process*** framework, however as it was identified above in theory that there are common stages in sales process that each business can consider. At the same time individual sales person and media agency emphasizes the same features of sales process as it was described in theory. MMC has their own sales process that suits their preferences and clients. MMC's sales process consists from 6 stages which more or less similar to current theoretical sales process.

One of the most significant aspects was asked from the respondents, question about ***pricing strategy***. MMC's price for media products depends on the region and purchase amount. Thus company stimulates potential buyers and existing customers to purchase more and/or for bigger amount. Outside sales person states that the price should be same or close to the market price in order to stay competitive and not to make loses. However he specifies that special/ exclusive offers should be made to attract potentials or to encourage existing clients to repeat purchase. Media Company tells that for agency it is difficult to state certain price, as in major cases price depend on the amount of work and preferences of the customer.

Every company needs to know how much sales force need to sell in order to generate necessary profit for the company. This calculation can be made through ***funnel calculation***, however according to the statement of independent sales person that initial calculation rarely can be precise, as there are majority of factors that depend on sales force skills, abilities and experience to conduct sales process. Thus at the first touch only estimations could be made. Moreover researchers have found out from words of MMC's sales representative the same idea about funnel calculation. However after evaluating sales activity of sales force MMC sales lead was able to calculate accurate funnel numbers and sales stages, which have to be fulfilled by each sales manager. These numbers are reflected in questionnaire answers. Thus investigators will provide proposal of funnel calculations in following chapter

Analyzing all three answers to the question concerning ***aftersales service*** all the respondent emphasized one common factor – after service call, which could imply different aims. One of those is to acquire the customer's feedback concerning the experience acquired from cooperation with the company or the owned product. Such an information might be useful for identifying the aspects in communication procedure, which should be improved to support the relations with exciting customer or to build up the new with potentials. Furthermore, in few cases follow-up phone call is convenient to understand the customer's desire of continuing the contract especially if the customer has acquired the service rather than a product. For example MMC's sales representative executes the follow-up phone call before the contract with the customer will be expired. Finally, after sales service call could be used for providing the existing customer with new product and/or additional product features, which could bring new solutions for his/her business activities.

3.3 Analysis of media buyers

Researchers have executed media buyers' analysis to understand the current communication strategy of MMC towards existing customers, to find out strong and weak side in communication strategy/ model and to examine perceptions of potential customers towards desired communications. In particular analysis media buyers are represented by Restel Oy and Cursor Oy. Additionally students' aim was to

understand existing sales management of MMC and to know how potentials perceive media product sales process.

Investigators were trying to understand which ***marketing communication tools*** are mostly used by existing and potentials when they the media products and services. Both responded that mostly they rely on partners opinions and in marketing communication tool it is called Word of Mouth. The reason of reliability of this communication tool is that partners are the third party between the company and media agency. Thus they only would give the true facts concerning the experience that they had with an agency without having an interest to provide with false arguments. Moreover, direct marketing was emphasized only by existing customer as a tool for choosing the media, while the potential indicated the direct marketing more as a spam rather than an effective communication method. Furthermore, the interviewer from Restel Oy indicated exhibitions and workshops as one of the useful tools for obtaining information about media products and agencies. From those tools there is a possibility to observe clear picture about offered products and services by media company by having an open discussions with companies' representatives. E-commerce does not appear as a reliable tool and does not bring most influence on decision making process towards media products. Therefore students can state that there are four main supplementary tools that effect personal selling which direct marketing, exhibitions/ workshops, word-of-mouth and e-commerce. These tools bring the most value to the potential clients.

On question concerning ***quick response and price flexibility*** both respondents said that it depends on the product. For example, if product required to be customized due to the needs of the company the speed of response should be quick. At some sense product's price is not a key factor influencing the decision making process. The primary aspect is that the actual product should correspond to its quality or product's effectiveness should correspond to its price and to the market price as well. However, each company has its own limited marketing budget allocated per each year and marketers must spend it with maximum effectiveness.

The ***significance of personal selling*** varies due to the product's complexity and company's cooperation procedure. For example the potential customer pointed out that personal selling is important if business cooperation is built on trust and loyalty and implies the long term relations. In the same time the existing customer responded that personal selling is essential if the offered product from the side of media company is complex and requires additional explanation due to its use.

Investigators also asked about the ***sales channel*** which is preferred by interviewing parties. The project manager from Cursor Oy stated that there is no actual difference which sales channel the media company use for selling its products, until wholesales process is harmonized and works conveniently. At the same time existing customer pointed out that for choosing the media they use an outsource media planning companies, which are influential on the company's media choice.

That was found from the responses of interviewed parties that there is no actual difference between English and Finnish as a ***communication language***, because both companies operate internationally. However, based on suggestion of brand manager from Restel Oy the media company, which wants to operate on the Finnish market should employ the sales representatives, who knows the Finnish language as it would bring most value to the company's sales process.

Communication tools such as telephone, e-mail and face-to face meeting should be used on different communication stages and those are not universal for each case. For example based on opinion of brand manager on initial communication stage phone should be used more rather than electronic mail mostly perceived as a spam letters. At the same time Cursor Oy counts that the first contact should be executed through e-mail, because as that was stated by project manager those letters are accurately investigated. Both interviewers agreed that phone call should be used for arranging a meeting on which both parties could have negotiation process concerning customization of particular media product to the company's needs.

Investigators tried to understand the general facts, which could raise the ***interest of the companies towards media products***. The respondents from both companies mentioned they desire to realize the effect, which they could after purchasing the media product. Furthermore, it was pointed out it is quite significant to have a knowledge about general information of the audiences covered by particular media product.

The primary aspects, which might raise the interest of interviewed companies is the actual benefit, which company would acquire after product purchase. The first contact should be short and concrete and cover only general idea of the product, because it is complex enough to go deep in details on the first communication stage. Another important aspect stated by brand manager is that the sales representative should be honest. For example, if the sales representative feels that particular media product does not cover need of the company, he/she should point this fact out. This feature would create the reliability to the media company, because the customer would acquire the feeling that sales representative strives to provide customized solutions rather than simply to sell the product.

Indicators found out ***product presentation*** (PP) should not be general, but in the same time not too tailored made especially on the first communication stage. The reason is that the media company could provide buyer with too much of promises and would not fulfil it, what in its order would negative impact on customer's loyalty to media company.

The importance of follow up phone call was pointed out only by brand manager by stating that it is essential from the side of media agency to discuss the actual result and success which was acquired by the buyer. Cursor Oy specified after sales service phone call as an essential activity for the media company rather than for the buyer, because in at some point buying party does not acquire anything after. However, it could bring a benefit to the media company in terms acquiring the customer's feedback and getting the knowledge due to improvements.

Additionally researchers conducted the set of questions concerning the ***experience that the exciting customer has encountered with MMC*** with an eye to identify strong and weak sides of current communication, sales process and product and services themselves. Thus certain analysis will affect outcome of suggestions and recommendations for the commissioned company.

Researchers were interested in ***communication channels***, which initiated the actual cooperation between MMC and buyer. According to the respondents the primary communication tool which initiated the communication process was partner's recommendations. Furthermore, few key aspects were found, which differentiate the company from its competitors. The first aspect is the prices, which is quite low compare to the market price. Secondly, the price corresponds to the quality. The third aspect, which was more addressed to the product than to the company is that provided media channel, "Terve" magazine, is fresh and covers the interest of its audiences. Furthermore, the interviewer mentioned only few weaknesses, such as payment procedure and editing the text sent on print. However, one important aspect which needs to be mentioned is product presentation type. It should be more tailor-made and more individually customized rather than the general one.

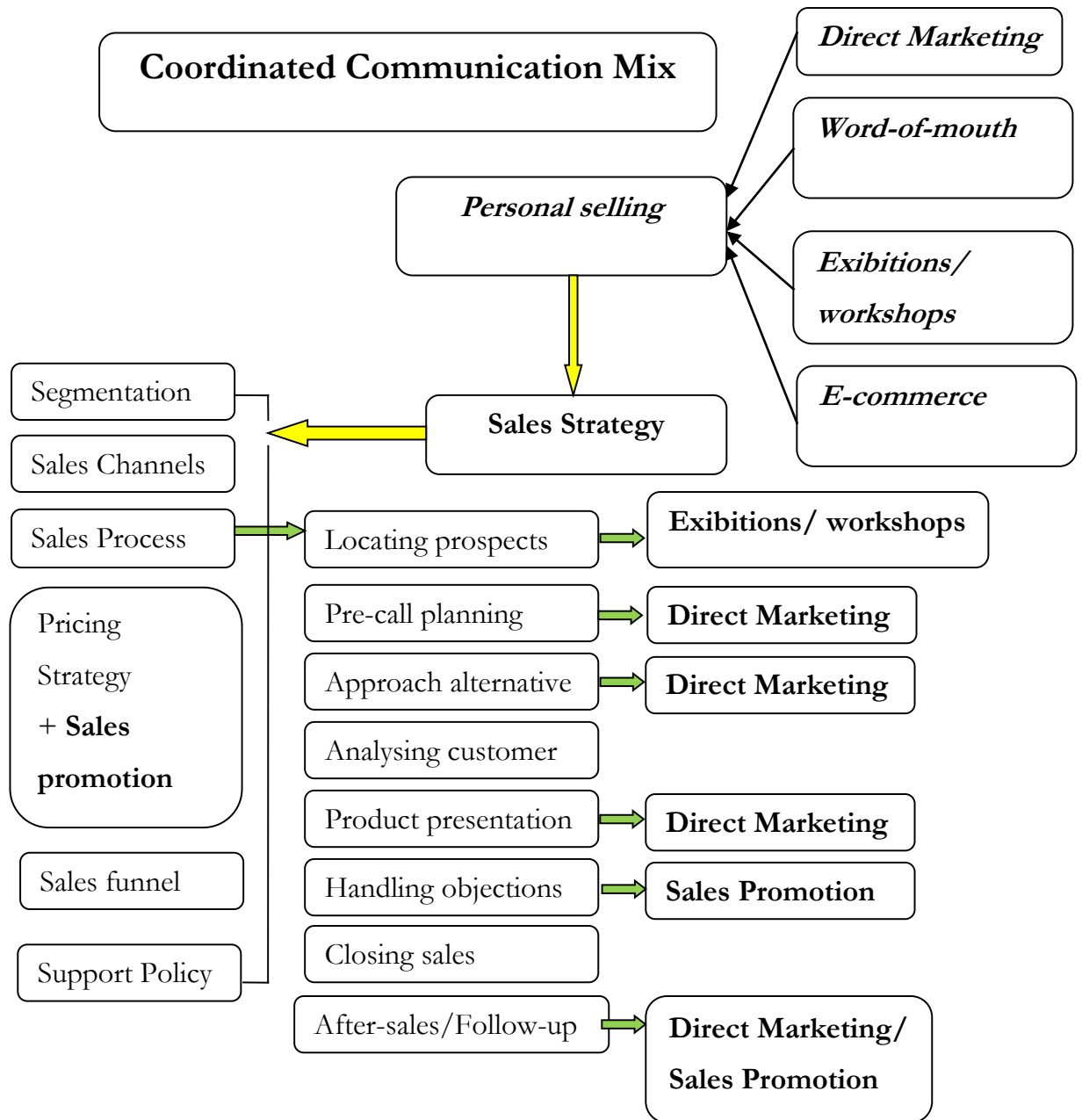
4 Suggestions and recommendations

First of all it was proved in subchapter 2.2 that Finnish companies spend comparatively vast amount of money on media products and services. Additionally investigators demonstrated that Russian tourist play vital role in Finnish economy and amount of Russian tourist increased in last years. Thus Makton Media Channels should consider Finnish market as a market to operate in.

Current chapter will provide answer to the research problem: **“How to effectively coordinate marketing communication/promotion mix to create/establish sustainability in sales?”** and will give valid suggestions and recommendations based on interview analysis. Investigators will try to draw coordinated communication mix that can be used for commissioned company in order to establish sustainability in sales. Following coordinated communication mix will include suggested sales strategy that will be created based on theory and collected data.

Students will present suggestions and recommendation in accordance to the theoretical framework in order to prove necessity of each topic included in current thesis.

Taking in account all the collected data, analysis and theory coordinated communication mix was re-constructed and is shown in Table 7. Particular coordinated communication mix can be viewed as a tool for commissioning company that can assist personal selling of media products. Below the Table 7 reasons of choosing certain tools are provided and explained in details.



Current coordinated communication mix can be considered by Makton Media Channels as a tool that can contribute to a better sales performance. However MMC should take in account 4 marketing communication tools that work separately for the benefit of personal selling which are direct marketing, word-of-mouth, exhibitions/ workshops, e-commerce.

Students recommend to MMC to participate in exhibitions, fairs and workshop organized in Finland, especially in such as travel fairs, as MMC will have a chance to reach wide range of potential prospects and create valuable word of mouth brand awareness.

Respondents were asked questions regarding marketing communications, which tools are more effective for selling media products. Analysis showed that the most effective communication tool in particular business environment is personal selling, word of mouth, exhibitions/ workshops, and direct marketing.

Direct marketing also effects personal selling as ease the initial stage of the sales process. Thus researchers recommend to MMC Oy to consider sending e-mail with general commercial offer to potential leads. This e-mail can create awareness of the company's products and services and in future will help to sales person to rely on particular e-mail in cold call process.

E-commerce should be perceived as a webpage of the company. Having own webpage, company can provide basic information about organization, products and services, and achievements etc. For instance when companies search for media companies in web platforms such as Google or others, they can open webpage of MMC and read what company is, and what it offers. Additionally this will also create word of mouth strategy, if potential leads will recommend MMC to some organization.

Word-of-mouth is one of the most important marketing communication tool that should be taken in account by MMC. Investigators recommend to Makton Media Channels Oy to maintain healthy relations with existing customers, as present clients can always recommend company to someone else. In general word-of-mouth is generated by successful operation of the company in particular business market. Therefore MMC should constantly perform on the highest level, and employees (sales representative) should behave professionally in order to possess MMC as a trustworthy media agency on the market.

These are the ways how MMC could strengthen personal selling through 4 main communication tools.

Personal selling is a communication process thus one of the important things was to identify which language should be perceived as an interaction language. Makton Media Channels Oy operates in Finnish business market, according to analysis students suggest to the commissioner employ Finnish speaking person, with knowledge of Russian language, Russian culture and Russian mentality. Other words saying it should be Finnish speaking Russian person. Therefore personal selling process will be more effective and will increase loyalty towards MMC, and ease the process of communication. Thus students can state that personal selling and all the further steps in sales strategy should be considered in Finnish.

Collected data and information have showed that **sales strategy** should consist from 5 main steps, however one additional tool should be included. First step in sales strategy is **segmentation**. Analysis has shown that MMC should include companies that have business connection with Russia in their segmentation process. As these companies are the most potential prospects. Additionally researchers recommend to consider companies financial statement when segment. Companies that have positive financial statement will not cause problems when it will come to payment.

Second step is sales channel. Investigators advice to use direct channel (sales representatives) as a primary channel. In analysis students outlined all the factors that benefit the choice of sales representatives neither free agents.

The most important was to understand what the **sales process** should look like in media sales strategy. Additionally gathered data display that there is a need to use various marketing communication tools as a supplementary tools that will assist sales process. At the moment MMC has 6 steps in sales process. However students propose to reconsider it to 8 steps as in current theoretical framework. In case MMC initiates the activity of above describe marketing communication tools - direct marketing, exhibitions/ workshops, e-commerce, word-of-mouth – the 1st step of locating and

qualifying prospects will be easier due to already reached audience through those tools. ***Pre-calling*** can be supplemented with direct marketing where sales representative of MMC sends out general commercial offer to potential client. In accordance to analysis researchers advise to MMC to state only important factors, which will capture attention of the potential client. Such factors should be: general idea of the product, benefits that products or services will bring to the customer, and what kind of audience and amount of audience will company reach by purchasing MMC's products or services. In case if the client wasn't reach sales person should consider another way to meet potential customer. Such ***alternative approaches*** as informal event, exhibitions or post letter can be considered. 4th step in sales process should be ***analysis of the customer***, which means that MMC provides tailor-made commercial offer that will correspond to customers interests and needs, and make client to feel special. With prepared tailor-made offer sales representative proceed to 5th stage of ***product presentation*** where it is significant to emphasize criteria that influence media purchasing behavior. 6th stage is ***handling objections*** which can be supplemented with sales promotion tool, where sales person can offer a discount or offer to buy bigger quantity for smaller price. 7th stage was mentioned in analysis, that there are disadvantages from MMC side. These disadvantages were payment procedure and following steps to release media product. In both cases investigators could recommend to managing staff to set rules in what time payment should be made by sales representatives that will force them to be more accurate and act faster in order to acquire sale and satisfy customer with the purchased product or service. The last stage in sales process should be ***aftersales service/ follow-ups (support policy)*** where sales person should initiate contact with client and discuss project that was executed. Analyze the whole outcome and make a suggestion what can be made or to improve certain activity or how to maintain and increase achieved results in future together with MMC. Particular analysis can be done using direct marketing. This is suggested sales process for MMC, which is based on theory and collected data.

Another important aspect in coordinated communication mix is ***pricing strategy***. First of all in accordance to gathered information researchers recommend to reconsider pricing strategy for the products and services in a way of increase of the

price for the products and services. In analysis of buyers was mentioned that MMC price for products is considerably lower than in current market. Secondly pricing strategy should be supplemented with sales promotion tool in order to provide exclusive discount to the client and make him feel special.

In accordance to theory and data provided by respondents students can state that MMC should consider ***funnel calculation*** after evaluating sales activity of each sales person within the company.

To sum up researchers can state that Finnish companies are interested in Russian market as it is a potential market that brings noticeably vast profit to Finnish businesses. Therefore Russian companies that sell their services and products that aims to attract Russian audience to Finnish market should approach target group using accurately prepared strategy. Investigators have compared theory to collected information and above presented steps that are reflected in coordinated communication mix. Certain task was executed with interest of Makton Media Channel and provides valuable suggestions and recommendation that can be used in order to establish sustainability in sales. Moreover Makton Media Channel can consider sales strategy which is integral part of coordinated communication mix.

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Attachments

Attachment 1. Questions to free agent/ experienced sales person.

Part 1. For creating the sales strategy

1. What is the best way to identify the key accounts of the company in Finland?
(segmentation)
2. Which are the best sales channels for selling in B2B market? Why? (Channels)
 - a. Indirect (agents)
 - b. Direct (Company's sales reps; Local sales subsidiary)
3. How the sales process should look like? (Sales process)
4. Shall the company design the pricing strategy? (Pricing strategy)
 - a. Why?
 - b. Which strategy works better in your opinion?
5. Funnel questions
 - a. What should be the approximate satisfying wage for the sales person and commission?
 - b. How many calls one sales person is able to perform in one day?
 - c. How many meetings one sales person is able to proceed in a month?
6. What kind of after sales service the company should do for its prospect or how to keep the customer's loyalty?
Mr A states, that it is a sales representative's responsibility to get in touch with clients after the product or service is sold, to figure out his opinion about what was done.

Part 2. Questions regarding coordinated communication mix

1. What are the communication tools, which would assist the sales reps to increase the amount of sales? Why and How?
 - i. Advertising
 - ii. Sales promotions
 - iii. Exhibitions
 - iv. Public relations

- v. Direct marketing
- vi. E-commerce

Attachment 2. Questions to Makton Media Channels sales representative.

Part 1. For creating the sales strategy

1. By which criteria do you identify your key accounts?
2. Which sales channels does the company use at the moment?
 - a. Direct (sales reps)
 - i. How many?
 - ii. How many customers were attracted by those?
 - iii. How many sales (money equivalent) are accomplished in average per month?
 - b. Indirect (agents)
 - i. How many agents?
 - ii. How many customers were attracted by those?
 - iii. How many sales (money equivalent) are accomplished in average per month?
3. What are the primary sales stages of your sales process?
4. Does the company use any pricing strategy?
 - a. Which kind of and why?
5. Funnel calculation questions
 - a. What is the approximate wage of the sales person?
 - b. How many sales calls on sales person executes in a day?
 - c. What is the approximate amount of meetings executed by one sales person in one month?
 - d. How much time one meeting consume from the working time including the time spent on travelling?
6. Does the company execute the after sales service in order to retain the prospect's loyalty?
 - a. Why?
 - b. If yes, how?

Part 2. For coordinating communication mix

1. Which of those communication tools does your company use for simplifying the job of the sales reps? Why and how?

- i. Advertising
- ii. Sales promotions
- iii. Exhibitions
- iv. Public relations
- v. Direct marketing
- vi. E-commerce

Attachment 3. Questions to existing customers.

Part 1. For coordinating marketing communication tools

1. Which communication tools help you to choose the media for your company?
 - i. Advertising
 - ii. Sales promotions
 - iii. Exhibitions
 - iv. Public relations
 - v. Direct marketing
 - vi. E-commerce
2. Which is the most effective communication tool that affects your final decision?
3. Which kind of media products do you use to reach the company's aims?
 - a. Why?
4. Why are you interested in Russian tourists as your consumers?
 - a. Which tools do you use to attract them?
 - a. Do you use local or other companies, which provides with media services?
 1. Why?
 - b. How big is the share of Russian tourists in your business?

Part 2. For creating Sales strategy

1. Sales channels
 - a. How the price flexibility and quick response is important for you?
 - b. How the personal selling is important for you, when it comes to media products?
 - c. Which communication language do you prefer?
 - d. Which communication method is preferred and on which communication stage?
 - i. Telephone
 - ii. E-mail
 - iii. Face-to-face meeting
2. Sales process

- a. What are the primary aspects that might raise your interest to the media product?
- b. When sales person contacts you, which product features could capture your attention?
- c. What is the perception of the product presentation? (How the PP should be built up?)
 - i. Should it be tailored made offer?
 - ii. Should it be general commercial offer?
- d. After establishing the relations between the media company, do you prefer to be contacted by sales person to be offered new products or to contact the company by yourself?

Part 3. Attitude towards MMC and its products

- 1) Through which channels did you get to know the MMC's media products?
- 2) What were the primary aspects that raised your interest to the MMC's products?
- 3) Does the company use enough effective communication tools to deliver information to its clients? Why?
- 4) Are there any weaknesses that the company should improve in communication?
- 5) Does the price of MMC's products correspond to its expected/promised quality?
- 6) How the sales person has fulfilled his/her tasks?
- 7) Does language affected the business negotiation process?
- 8) What were the advantages and disadvantages of the whole sales process that you had with MMC' sales representative?
- 9) How the sales person made you interested in the product in the first communication stage?
- 10) What kind of presentation the sales person made?
 - a. Was it tailored made offer?
 - b. Was it general commercial offer?
 - i. What were the advantages and disadvantages of the presentation?
- 11) How would you evaluate the after sales service of MMC Company?
 - a. Why?

Attachment 4. Questions to potential customers of MMC

Part 1. For creating the sales strategy

1. Sales channels
 - a. How the price flexibility and quick response is important for you?
 - b. How the personal selling is important for you, when it comes to media products?
 - c. Which communication language do you prefer?
 - d. Which communication method is preferred and on which communication stage?
 - i. Telephone
 - ii. E-mail
 - iii. Face-to-face meeting
2. Sales process
 - a. What are the primary aspects that might raise your interest to the media product?
 - b. When sales person contacts you, which product features could capture your attention?
 - c. What is the perception of the product presentation? (How the PP should be built up?)
 - i. Should it be tailored made offer?
 - ii. Should it be general commercial offer?
 - d. After establishing the relations between the media company, do you prefer to be contacted by sales person to be offered new products or to contact the company by yourself?

Part 2. For coordinating marketing mix

2. Which communication tools help you to choose the media for your company?
 - i. Advertising
 - ii. Sales promotions
 - iii. Exhibitions
 - iv. Public relations

- v. Direct marketing
 - vi. E-commerce
- 3. Which is the most effective communication tool that affects your final decision?
- 4. Which kind of media products do you use to reach the company's aims?
 - a. Why?
- 5. Are you interested in Russian tourists as your consumers?
 - a. If YES
 - i. Why?
 - ii. Which media do you use to attract them?
 - iii. Do you use local or other companies, which provides with media services?
 - 1. Why?
 - iv. How big is the share of Russian tourists in your business?
 - b. If NO
 - i. Why?
 - ii. Are you planning to target Russian tourists as your potentials in the future?
 - iii. How aware you are about the existing demand among Russians on the Finnish products and services?

Attachment 5. Questions to Media Company.

Part 1

12) Which communication tools do you use to promote your company/ receive valid information for your company?

- i. Advertising
- ii. Sales promotions
- iii. Exhibitions
- iv. Public relations
- v. Direct marketing
- vi. E-commerce
- vii. Personal selling

a. Why those?

Part 2

13) By which criteria do you segment (choose) B2B customers and key accounts?

14) How do you create/build the list of potential customers?

15) Do you have sales department? If you have, what is the structure of sales department? (Personnel who is responsible for cold calls and personnel who is responsible for incoming customers?)

16) Which sales channels do you use to sell media products? (free agents, sales force, other)

a. If free agents (freelancers)

- i. Why?
- ii. How many?
- iii. What are the benefits and challenges?
- iv. How do you motivate them to sell?

b. If sales force

- i. Why?
- ii. How many sales reps?
- iii. How do you identify amount of required sales reps?
- iv. Do your sales reps work internally or externally?

1. Why is it so?
 2. What are the advantages and disadvantages?
- v. How do you motivate them to sell?
- 17) How your sales process looks like? What are the primary objections in sales process?
 - 18) Which communication tools influence and support personal selling process?
 - 19) How do you choose the price for you media products? Do you have any discount system? Which criteria it is based on?
 - 20) What is the most important after sales service that B2B customers value most?

Attachment 6. List of competitors.

Company	Project Focused on Russian customer attraction	Website	Media channel
“GMP” Ltd.	Stop in Finland	http://www.stopinfin.ru	Printed magazine Social Network Online advertising
Media Kolmio Oy	Check in Finland	http://www.checkinfinland.ru/	Online advertising Social Network
Wosseno Oy	Venäjän Kauppatie	http://www.kauppatie.com/	Printed media Online advertising
Suomitech Oy	Variety of websites built for Russian customer attraction	http://www.russian.fi/ http://doska.fi/ http://novosti.fi/ http://kauppatori.ru/ http://joulu.ru http://afisha.fi/	Online advertising
Imapro Oy	Developing social network corporate pages	http://imapro.fi	Social network
Mediatalo Toimelias Oy	Developing social network corporate pages	http://www.toimelias.fi	Social network
Rivergate Finland Oy	Developing advertising campaigns in Russia	http://www.rivergate.fi	Social Network Developing Websites Printed media
Finnportal	Finn Portal	http://www.finnportal.ru	Online advertising
I Travel	Digital advertising in Saint-Petersburg	http://itravel.fi	Electronic advertising
Radio Satellite	Radio Sputnik	http://radiosputnik.fi/	Radio Online advertising

Finland Oy